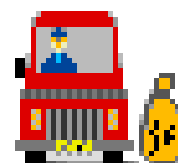
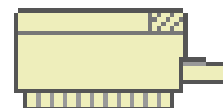
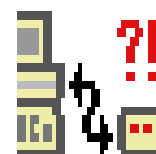
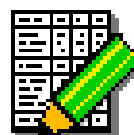
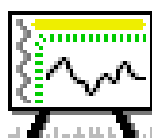
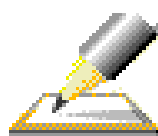
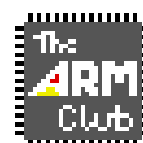
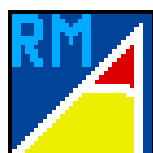


THE  
**ARM**  
**CLUB**



# **Eureka**

**The Magazine for Members of The ARM Club**  
*Issue 18 — Spring 1996*



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**Goodbye Acorn, Hello Xemplar & ART**

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## **The ARM Club Magazine**

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## THE FUTURE

Acorn, as we knew it, does not exist any more. Back in February, Acorn announced the setting up of a new joint company with rival Apple. This company, now known as Xemplar Education Ltd, exists solely to market hardware and software solutions to the UK education market.

Where will Xemplar source its products? Initially they will come from both Apple and Acorn, but to directly quote Brendan O'Sullivan, its new Managing Director: *"Acorn sees Apple's PowerPC as the platform of the future, so ultimately there will be a seamless and harmonious transition to that platform."*

With reduced access to the UK education market, what remains of Acorn, now known as *Acorn Risc Technologies*, will have to continue changing radically.

Why should customers retain confidence in the new company? It is still far too early to predict the future, but it would be unwise to take any hasty decisions since the situation is changing so quickly.

There are some bright lights on the horizon, for example the Oracle deal and StrongARM, for now we should enjoy our machines and wait to see what happens next.



*Simon Burrows*  
*Eureka Editor*

# Editorial

## THE ARM CLUB

The Club exists for its members, those of us involved in running it do so for the enjoyment, not for any financial gain.

We are at present in a strong position, both in terms of number of members (currently over 1500) and in finances. We all enjoy running the Club too. Occasionally people do forget the nature of our Club, and the fact that we all have our own families and full-time jobs.

For example, we cannot guarantee that this magazine will appear exactly every three months, it might be that it gets delayed by a few weeks due to personal circumstances. We are sorry when this happens but it may be unavoidable. Your membership now lasts for four issues of this magazine, not a calendar year, so you actually gain by having access to all of the other benefits of membership for a little bit longer!

Occasionally we do make mistakes, where this happens, please write and tell us. We will do everything possible to put the matter right. Finally, we now offer a new service to all members, a dedicated telephone help line for technical enquiries and impartial buying advice.



# Introducing Xemplar Education

Simon Burrows explores what has happened at Acorn over recent months and what the future may hold...

Last September, following the arrival of new Managing director David Lee, Acorn embarked on the first in a series of radical restructurings designed to restore the company's fortunes.

At the time, people were taken aback at the size of the changes which involved the setting up of an Agency system for selling computers to schools, the closing of several departments and the formation of several new divisions, Acorn Education and Applied Risc Technologies.

Within six months, everything had been up-ended again with the news that Acorn was to transfer its entire stake in the UK education market to a new joint venture company, Xemplar Education Ltd, formed 50:50 with Apple Computer UK.

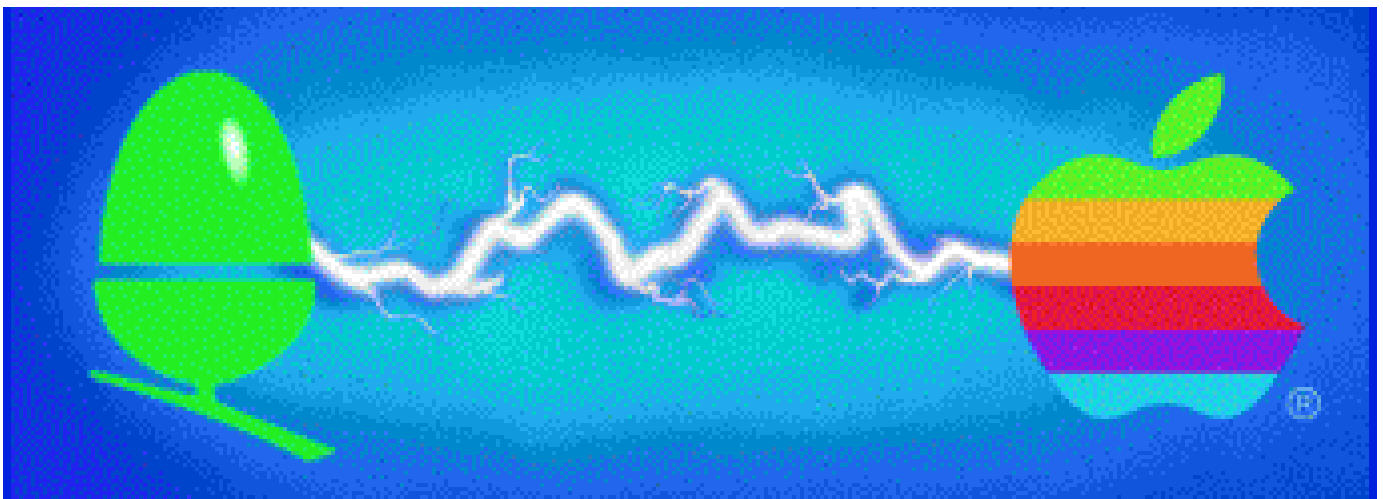
This arrangement coincided with the announcement of a broader European

alliance between major Acorn shareholder Olivetti and Apple Computer and it has never been made clear to what extent it was forced upon Acorn.

All change yet again. Acorn Education was replaced by Xemplar Education Ltd, currently based at Acorn's Vision Park site. Some more staff were made redundant and Acorn's efforts in promoting the new name *Acorn Education* had been wasted.

Realising that the Acorn name was about to disappear from the marketplace, the remaining Acorn divisions had their names changed again, this time to *Acorn Risc Technologies*, *Acorn Online Media* and *Acorn Network Computing* (a brand new division).

Xemplar Education Ltd is a separate company from Acorn, equally owned by



Acorn and Apple but mostly resourced from the former Acorn Education division.

Brendan O' Sullivan, formerly of Apple Ireland, was appointed as Managing Director of Xemplar, with Acorn's David Lee becoming Chairman.

O'Sullivan has pulled no punches in his statements about the new company, going on

record as saying "the new joint venture has an avowed aim to standardise on the Apple PowerPC platform. [...] Acorn has already said that it sees Apple's PowerPC as the platform of the future, so ultimately there will be a seamless and



*Acorn's flagship product, the Risc PC 700. What future?*

(PowerPC) platform. In theory this could run much of the existing RISC OS software although other hardware differences would be likely to cause substantial problems, especially for any products that are no longer supported.



*Computers for Schools is probably Acorn's most successful ever promotion*

harmonious transition to that platform, whilst keeping all of that super software available."

Where does this leave Acorn's loyal customer base? In the long term, Xemplar aims to convert the UK education market over to the PowerPC platform, probably by releasing a plug-in ARM processor card for the PPC

Acorn's home and enthusiast customers are now being handled by ART, the division headed by charismatic Peter Bondar which has been recruiting new staff in certain areas.

Xemplar will continue to use the selling model devised by Acorn Education, directing education sales through regional agents who receive a



commission on products bought by schools in their region, whether or not they were involved in setting up the deal. These agencies are largely the same as those selected by Acorn Education but with some Apple dealers included.

What about other dealers? Some of Acorn's other dealers which were not offered education agencies in the blood-letting last September have survived, and will in future be looked after by ART.

ART continues to promote its *Centres of Technology* scheme, whereby some dealers are given special status as being experts in dealing with the needs of enthusiasts.



They are allowed special privileges such as the ability to sell certain upgrades and sign up Clan members, however the system appears rather hit and miss with dealers being *promoted* to the scheme on the basis of votes cast by enthusiasts on ART's world wide web site.

Acorn's Clan, the great idea of providing direct support to enthusiasts, has proved rather disappointing in recent months

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*The A7000 is targeted at schools as a substitute for the IBM PC clone...*

with little activity taking place. Hopefully things will pick up now that some of the uncertainty has passed.

One piece of good news is the promotion of Acorn's ever-enthusiastic and energetic Dave Walker to the position of Engineering Support Manager at ART, where he will work for ART's Chris Cox to assist in running the Clan and looking after the needs of ART's Registered Developer community.

Chris Cox has changed job specification as well, no longer solely looking after the Clan but also heading up ART's product sales team. This will include selling products to enthusiasts & international customers, including Acorn dealers.

All in all, it has been a period of great change at Acorn. More is still to come over the next few months as some of the arrangements are tested in practice and modified as a result. How exciting!?

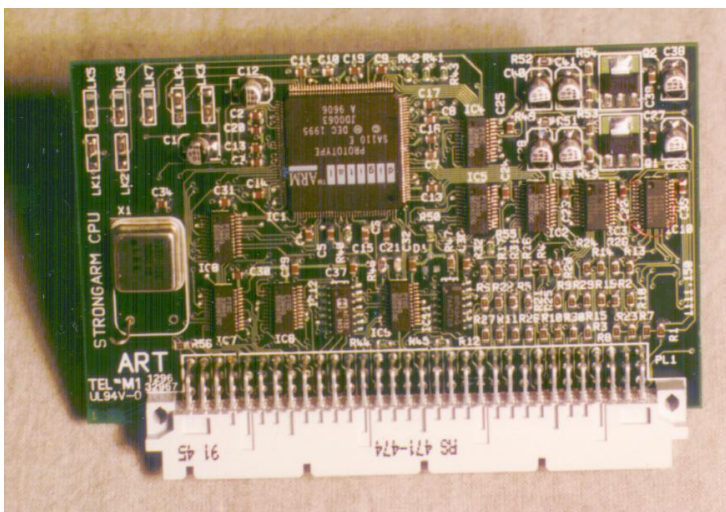


## StrongARM appears on the scene



Another piece of good news has been the announcement from ART that it has received first samples of the StrongARM processor, the joint development between ARM and Digital.

When the Risc PC was first launched back in April 1994, Acorn envisaged releasing fast ARM610, ARM700 and ARM800 processor upgrades. Since then, the fast ARM610 and ARM700 upgrades have fallen by the wayside to be replaced by the ARM710, and the StrongARM has appeared on the scene thanks to ARM's link with Digital.



*A prototype StrongARM processor card*

Firm details of StrongARM's performance are still in short supply, partly because they are improving as ART tweaks about with it.

Running RISC OS, benchmark readings of 330,000 Dhrystones have been recorded at internal clock speeds around 200MHz! ART has pledged to produce such a cacheless card as an upgrade for

the Risc PC, possibly with a cached card to follow. Without boring you with more benchmark values, indications are that the uncached StrongARM will offer around a three-fold speed increase over the ARM710.

ART still says that it will release an ARM810 upgrade as an alternative to the StrongARM, however this seems a little odd given the interest in StrongARM. A new version of RISC OS will be released to support the new processor.

Finally for now, ART has been whetting our appetites with talk of two possible new laptop machines, the so-called *Stork* and *NewsPAD* computers. There are currently no firm plans to release these as products.

*Simon Burrows*



*A version of the Stork prototype*

# **Latest News from around the Club**

The Club may have seemed fairly quiet but lots has been happening behind the scenes!

**T**he ARM Club Annual General Meeting took place on Saturday 30th March in Lancing, following our successful Open Day.

We welcomed three new members onto the Club Committee, and two members retired due to personal commitments.

Geoff Stilwell, our erstwhile Secretary for a couple of years, got married in early April (many congratulations to Geoff and Sylvie!). Understandably he

wishes to devote more time to family matters and we are very grateful to Geoff for all of his efforts. We know that he will be continuing to support the Club and his cheerful face will continue to support our various events.

Rebecca Shalfield is standing down after starting a new job working for major Acorn company Atomwide. We were delighted to hear this news and that Rebecca will continue to be very active in the Acorn world.

## **Club Contact Details**

The Club is currently in the process of changing some of these details in order to improve the service to members. Please bear with us during the changeover.

**Tel 0973 891330**

**Fax 0181 446 3020**

Our new telephone number for technical support & buying advice.

This number can be used to send any Club related correspondence.

**Electronic Mail**  
**info@armclub.org.uk**

**Postal address**  
**(Non Freepost)**

All of our electronic mail addresses have moved to this new domain. Please send email to this address for an automatic reply giving a full list of our Email addresses.

Unfortunately Freepost cannot be used by overseas members. Please address correspondence to: The ARM Club, 19 Woodberry Way, London N12 0HE using an ordinary stamp.



The three people who formally stood for election onto the Committee are Matthew Cook, Chris Price and Chas Mills.

Matthew joins as our youngest Committee member, starting a degree course at university later on this year. He is an expert on many topics, including bulletin boards, and has written several articles for Eureka in the past.

Chris is a teacher at Merton Court School in Sidcup, Kent, venue for several of our Open Days. He has wide experience of using Acorn machines in the classroom and has actively supported the Club for a number of years.

Chas will already be known to some of you as coordinator of our Discounts Scheme. He has also helped at a number of shows, where with his son he has provided a great deal of help to the Club.

## **Telephone numbers**

With Geoff Stilwell's marriage and decision to retire from the Committee, we are in the process of changing the Club's telephone number.

Please try to use alternative means of communication during this period, electronic mail is the best way of contacting us, followed by fax.

For technical enquiries and impartial buying advice, you may like to use our new Technical Telephone line, the number of which is given on page seven. This makes use of an Orange mobile

telephone which allows us to share the considerable workload of answering technical calls between ourselves. Please use this number in preference to writing in with technical queries, unless they are very complex, since we have found it much easier to deal with technical queries while speaking on the telephone.

## **Electronic Mail**

The ARM Club now has its own electronic mail domain, giving addresses of the form somebody@armclub.org.uk. Please use these addresses in preference to any others which you may have for us.

For a list of available addresses and details of our new electronic mailing list, please send email to:

**info@armclub.org.uk.**

Our World Wide Web site can be contacted at:

**<http://www.brunel.ac.uk/~cs92adf>**

We plan to move to a new dedicated ARM Club web server in the near future.

## **Missing Correspondence**

Over recent months we have become aware that various items of Club correspondence have been going astray courtesy of the Royal Mail. If you have contacted us about any matter and not received a satisfactory reply, please do write and tell us. We are very sorry for any inconvenience caused by this.

# **ARM**<sup>Acorn</sup>**'96** **CAMBRIDGE**

A DATE FOR YOUR DIARY (OR SCHEDULE).  
THE ARM CLUB'S NEXT OPEN DAY IS ON

**SATURDAY 25th MAY 1996**

AT

**THE GONVILLE HOTEL  
GONVILLE PLACE  
CAMBRIDGE  
CB1 1LY**

**DOORS OPEN AT 10.00AM UNTIL 4.00PM**

**ADMISSION CHARGES**

**ADULTS £1.00 (MEMBERS 1/2 PRICE)**

**CHILDREN UNDER 16 FREE**

**(BUT MUST BE ACCOMPANIED BY A RESPONSIBLE ADULT)**

**For further details contact: Ralph Sillett  
The ARM Club, FREEPOST ND6573, London N12 0BR.  
Fax: (0181) 446 3020 Email: [openday@armclub.org.uk](mailto:openday@armclub.org.uk)**

# Club Membership Statistics

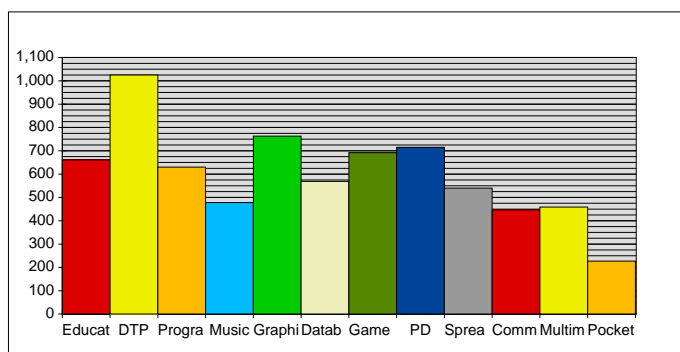
Some facts & figures from Membership Secretary Toby Smith

**Members:** 1532

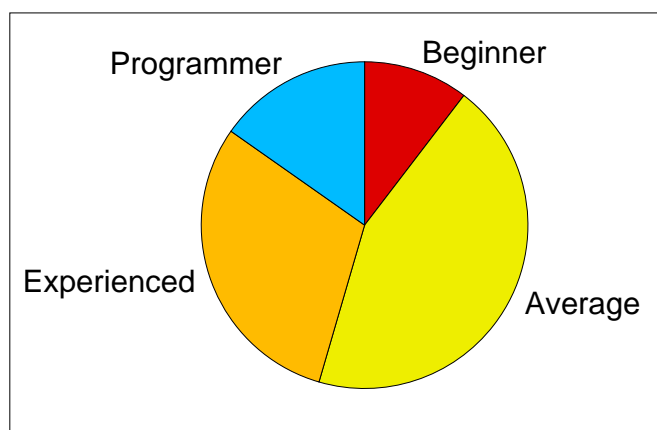
**European:** 37 (2.42%)

**International:** 13 (0.85%)

INTERESTS	Members	Percentage
Education	661	43%
DTP	1025	67%
Programming	630	41%
Music	478	31%
Graphics	763	50%
Databases	569	37%
Games	692	45%
PD	715	47%
Spreadsheet	540	35%
Comms	447	29%
Multimedia	459	30%
Pocket Book	227	15%



ABILITY	Members	Percentage
Beginner	120	11%
Average	509	47%
Experienced	349	32%
Programmer	176	16%
TOTAL	1081	71%



## Computer & Peripherals

A310	106	8%
A400 Series	144	10%
A540	24	2%
A3000 Series	342	25%
A4000	60	4%
A5000	292	21%
A7000	1	0%
Risc PC 600	575	41%
Risc PC 700	49	4%
A4	25	2%
Pocket Book	35	3%
TOTAL	1386	

CD-ROM	293	21%
Printer	979	71%
Scanner	253	18%
Digitiser	84	6%
Teletext	17	1%
Midi	52	4%
Modem	104	8%
Sampler	20	1%
PC Card	244	17%
Email	97	7%

If you know that your details are incorrect, please drop us a postcard. These figures were correct at the end of April 1996.

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# Acorn WORLD



## Acorn World 1996 Olympia

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What with all the changes taking place at Acorn, it comes as a pleasant surprise to hear that plans are already well underway for a new look Acorn World Show this year.

The three day event is being held a few days later than in the past, from Friday 1st to Sunday 3rd November. In a surprise move, the Show will be held at the new venue of Olympia Exhibition Centre Hall 2.

As usual, the Show will be sponsored by Acorn User Magazine in conjunction with EPS Events, the usual organisers. However for the first time, the organisers will have complete control over the Show's management rather than being controlled by Acorn itself.

# ACORNUSER

*Acorn User is sponsoring the Show*

One new attraction planned for the Show will be a 'Fringe' seminar programme, scheduled for the opening day Friday 1st November. This will consist of a series of seminars, workshops and demonstrations in a designated area

away from the main exhibition floor, "to allow committed and professional users of Acorn computers an opportunity for serious examination of techniques, issues and developments in education, publishing, the graphic arts, music etc.

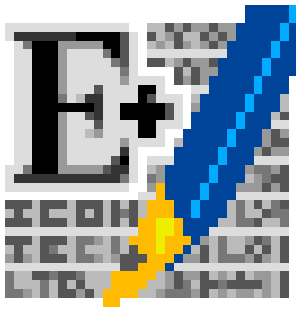
The Fringe is intended to be more than a commercial preview of new products. It is designed to meet the needs of all types of serious Acorn users".

Although it is still early days, many of the usual exhibitors have already signed up for stand space at the Show, signifying their continued confidence in the Acorn market and this annual event.

For those of you with access to the World Wide Web on the Internet, the organisers have set up a web site containing information about the Show, this can be found at <http://www.argonet.co.uk/acorn-world>. The organisers would welcome input from ordinary users as to what they would like to see at the Show, particularly in the Fringe programme.

As usual, we expect that The ARM Club will be exhibiting at the Show bringing all of the special offers, new products and opportunities for a chat which have existed at shows in the past.





# EasiWriter Professional

Peter Jennings tries word processing  
the EasiWriter Professional way

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**I**con Technology's long established word processor, EasiWriter, has always been rather overshadowed by its extended version, TechWriter, probably because the latter, which can produce scientific and technical documents, has less competition compared with the selection of word processors available.

It is, however, obvious from the first glance at its documentation that EasiWriter is a powerful program with a great deal to offer.

Now, after five years' use and development, the latest version has been promoted to the grander name of EasiWriter Professional. This comes on three discs accompanied by the spiral bound EasiWriter manual plus a version 3 supplement, another printed update to deal with the new "Professional" features and two files to cover even later additions. A Draw file to print an F-key strip is also supplied.

Clicking menu on the icon bar icon opens a document window from a list of available "Stationery", which in other words means templates. There is a slightly daunting array of more than 30 icons, plus an optional ruler, across the top of the page but interactive help is

available to identify them all. This and the fact that the default document is a multi-purpose standard page means that, unless you are completely new to word processing, it is easy to start using the program intuitively without needing to know about its many features. You will, however, soon have to delve into the documentation to get your full money's worth.

## Design & structure

EasiWriter is one of the few object-oriented, rather than frame based, word processors. This enables it to use a very flexible way of formatting documents, based on structures. This is similar to the system of styles used by other programs but, instead of being applied only to control the font and formatting of paragraphs, structure styles control objects which can be the complete document or part of it such as a paragraph, heading, section, list, table or graphic. So, for example, a Chapter structure can be set up to begin a new page and have a centred heading in a large bold font, followed by fully justified text in a different, smaller, typeface. In this way, it is easy to create an almost infinite range of "Stationery pad" templates for every purpose from letter writing to book layout.

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## New features

Those who have used EasiWriter before, especially anyone considering upgrading, will be interested to know first about the new features which have been added to the Professional version.

There is now index generation, a simplified way of making an index by selecting words or phrases from a document either while it is being written or after completion. A click on a menu entry, tool bar button or function key then brings up a window with the word or phrase already entered as the subject. This can be changed to any text up to 59 characters long and a qualifier of up to 119 characters can be added.

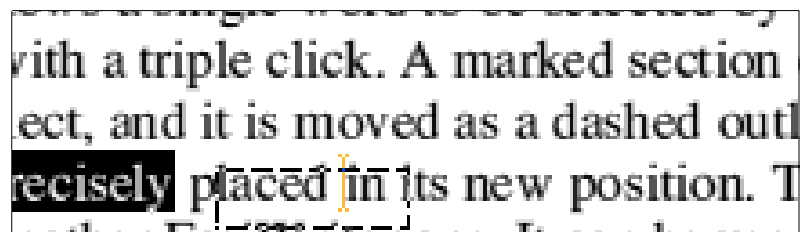
Qualifiers are sub-headings such as "BBC", "Archimedes" and "Risc PC" to go with the subject entry of "Acorn". Qualifiers are put into alphabetical order and indented. The index is sorted and page numbers and alphabetic headings are appended automatically. The indexed subject is invisibly marked, although the marking can be made visible, and if the text containing it is moved elsewhere, or even into a different EasiWriter Professional document, the index information is also copied. There is the option to have the index entry refer to another subject, such as "Computers see Acorn".

A contents generator will make a list of chapter and, optionally, section and subsection headings which can be used for a contents page. Lists can all be

The ARM Club Magazine page 13

automatically numbered in a choice of styles including Roman numerals, letters of the alphabet and/or with bullets.

Text file saving has been improved, making it easier to send documents to other applications and the Internet. The line length can be set to a user-defined number of characters and carriage returns, line feeds and combinations of them added. Tabs can be output as either tab characters (ASCII 09) or as eight spaces and draft printing is available.



with a triple click. A marked section  
ect, and it is moved as a dashed outl  
precisely placed in its new position. T

*Drag and drop allows selected areas to be moved, even into other applications, with a dashed box and arrow for precise repositioning.*

There is now a rather clumsy version of smart quotes, which can be switched on from the icon bar menu. When this is set, the grave accent (`), to the left of the numerals at the top of the keyboard, becomes a single opening quote mark (') and two quick presses of the key produce a single-character double opening quote ("). The single quote mark on the keyboard (') works similarly with one or two presses for closing quotes ( ' and "). As an alternative to this, there are several PD and shareware programs available which will convert the keyboard quote marks directly into smart quotes (including one supplied on the Eureka 16 magazine disc).

Pamphlet printing, kerning, crop marks, bookmarks and save as Postscript have

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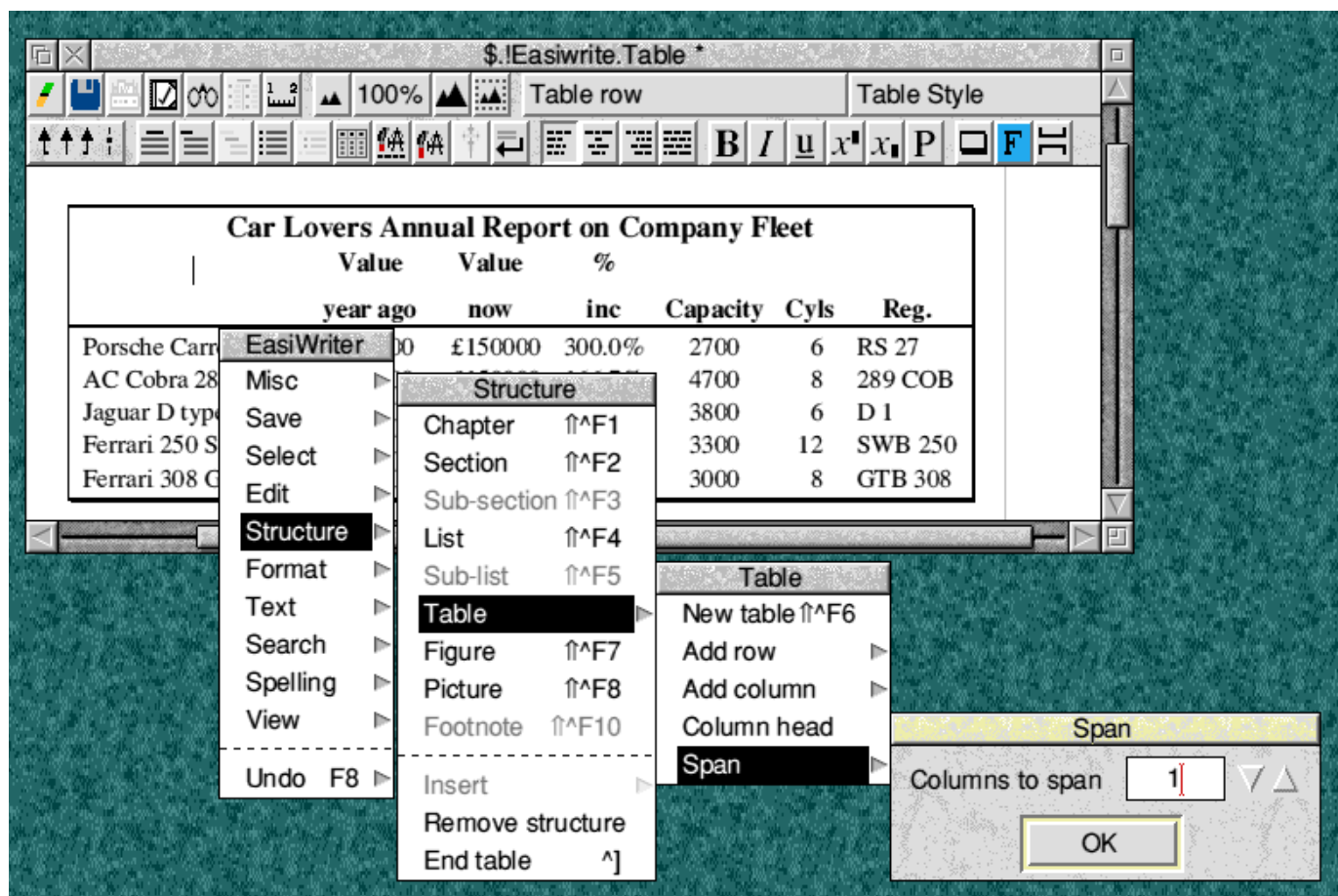
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also been introduced, the spelling checker can now handle “fi” and “fl” ligatures, there is improved hyphenation for German words and JPEG files are supported in RISC OS 3.60. Other features have also been improved.

One of the most interesting features from earlier versions is drag and drop editing, which is often a quicker option than cut and paste. Both methods can make use of a rapid marking facility which allows a single word to be selected by double clicking on it and a whole paragraph to be marked with a triple click. A marked section of text can be dragged in the usual way, by holding down Select, and it is moved as a dashed outline box with a down-pointing arrow which allows it to be placed precisely in its new position.

This does not have to be in the same document or even in another EasiWriter one. It can be used to copy text into other applications, such as Edit, which support the global clipboard although I found that, when exporting, the receiving application’s own caret had first to be placed in position where the new text is to go. A drag and drop within the same document deletes the text from its original position but copying to another document or application leaves the original text in place unless Shift is held down while dragging. There is an undo facility to allow for any mistakes or second thoughts.

The undo/redo tool is the first rather enigmatic icon (seemingly intended to represent an eraser) on the document tool



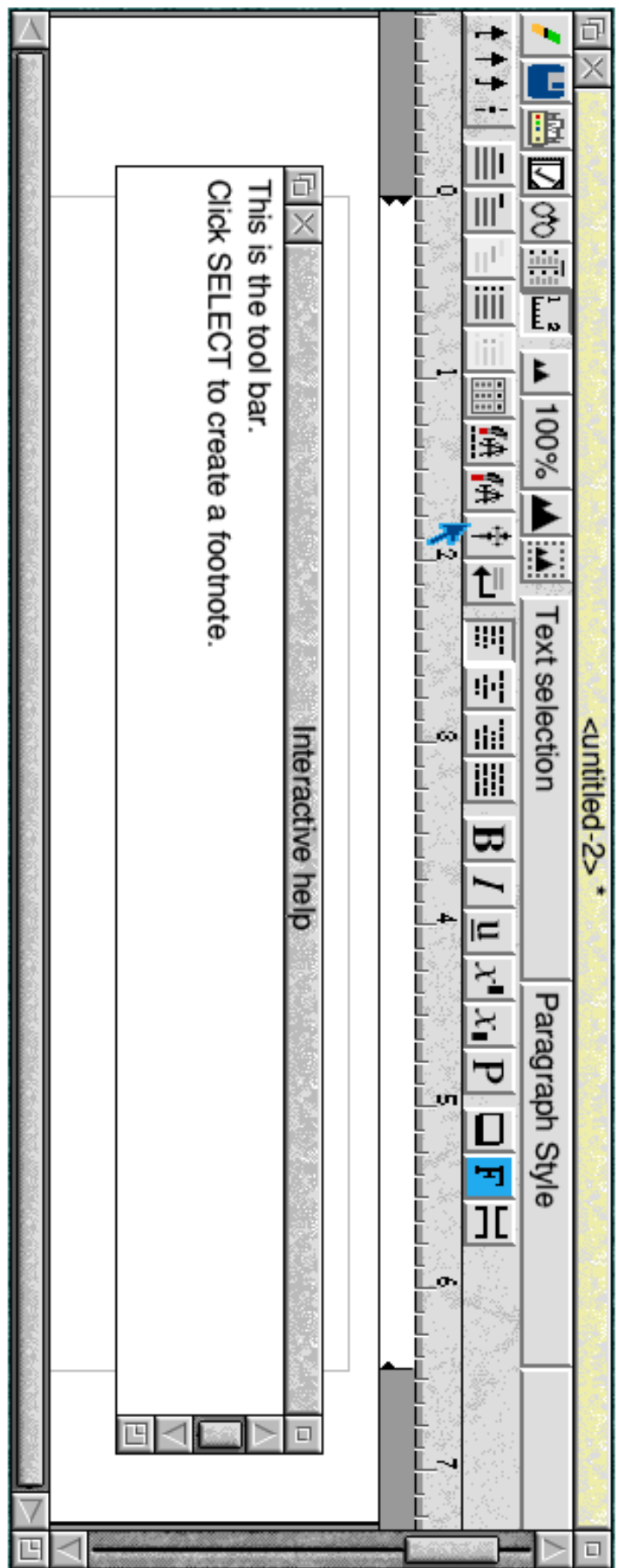
*Table making is made easy. Entries can span more than one column and column widths are adjusted automatically as you type in.*

bar and a look along these two lines of buttons will help to illustrate just how powerful EasiWriter Professional is.

Next along the top line are familiar save and print icons, the first of which produces the usual save box when clicked with Select or saves immediately to an existing pathname if Adjust is clicked. The print button works in a similar way to open a print dialogue box or send the document directly to the printer. Next is the spelling checker with Select checking the complete document, Adjust checking anything which has been selected and Menu opening the spelling sub-menu, where interactive checking can be ticked. A pair of spectacles identifies the find/replace button, with Select opening the dialogue box, Adjust finding the next occurrence and Menu opening the search sub-menu.

A new icon opens the “Add to Index” box and this is followed by a button to show or hide the ruler and toggle the scales on it. Next are four zoom buttons to change page magnification to half, full size or double and to zoom a chosen area. The rest of the top line is taken up with selection and style indicators which can be clicked on to change them.

The second row of buttons has draggable tab icons followed by buttons to create chapters, sections, sub-sections, lists, sub-lists, tables, figures, pictures and footnotes. Then there is a button to end the current structure followed by standard icons for formatting. Bold, italic and underlining



*The double row of buttons on the toolbar indicates the wide range of features available and there is interactive help to identify them.*



are selectable from the next three buttons and these icons are self-explanatory as are the next two, for superscript and subscript. The last four on the line remove effects from the selected text or picture and produce windows to change borders, the text font and size and the spacing between structures and lines.

One of EasiWriter's most impressive features from its early days is its Table Editor, which automatically adjusts the width of columns as you type, without having to reset the tabs. Entries are easily aligned and formatted and can span more than one column. Rules and borders can be added. Imported CSV (comma separated values) files are automatically converted into tables and, as EasiWriter Professional cannot save in CSV format, tables are automatically exported as TSV (tab separated values) files.

Working with this program gives the feeling that it has just about every feature that can be found in Acorn word processors so it was an undue disappointment to discover anything missing, however trivial. The main omission I would like to see added is the ability to print a selection, so making it easy to use the address in a letter to print a label for the envelope. It can be done, less conveniently, by dragging the Save icon, with "Selection" ticked, to the printer icon on the icon bar. Alternatively, the selected words can be dragged there directly although styles, including the font, will then be lost.

Style changes cannot be exported, which meant that a document where a number

of words in capitals had been changed into lower case, by the very useful Text-Case sub-menu, lost these corrections when saved as a text file. It would also be an advantage to be able to save text in CSV format although TSV files can easily be converted using Edit's find and replace facility.

EasiWriter Professional is not meant to be a desk top publisher, although it can produce simple illustrated documents, and anyone needing to incorporate mathematical equations will probably want the more expensive TechWriter, which has also been upgraded to a "Professional" version. But if you are seeking a top grade word processor which is easy to use and which has had ALMOST every desirable feature you can think of included during five years of improvements, EasiWriter Professional should well suit your requirements.

*Peter Jennings*

EasiWriter Professional costs £119 +VAT direct from Icon Technology or from good dealers. It is also available to schools direct from Xemplar Education.

Icon Technology Limited can be contacted at: 5 Jarrom Street, Leicester, LE2 7DH.

Tel 0116 2546225. Fax 0116 2470706.  
Email [mike@lccgroup.co.uk](mailto:mike@lccgroup.co.uk)

# ***ARNOLD'S OBSERVATIONS***

*Steve Arnold is a bit worse for wear after a few pints of the best?!*

Welcome once again to my wacky world, or is it your world!?

I was very late in writing this article — so late that the Editor killed me! and I'm talking from the spirit world.

Well, what do you expect after drinking 6 pints of Murphys?! Anyway on with my Observations for this month:

## **Acorn & Apple in combination**

Recently Acorn Education announced it is teaming up with Apple Computer UK to form Xemplar Education, a new company intended to develop the UK education market.

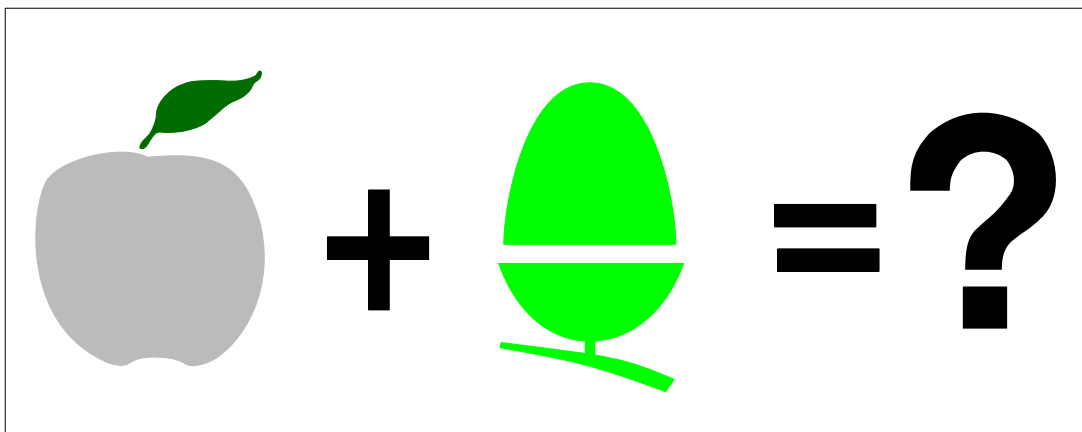
In some respects this is a strange marriage, but nevertheless an expected one — both Acorn and Apple are under intense pressure from the “industry standard” PC.

Apple, on the face of it, come out slightly ahead from the deal as being the greater winners in this partnership; they

will gain access to all of Acorn's vast knowledge and understanding of the IT requirements of education in the UK and more importantly access to its market.

Acorn will gain in terms of the vast marketing skills and global profile of Apple as well as some stability in terms of the partnership. The wry will probably say “It could only be Acorn that would join in partnership with a company that has just announced a major quarterly loss!”. However there is much to admire about the arrangement, it is possibly the only way Acorn Education could survive in the long term. It has chosen a partner that understands the issues of being proprietary in software and hardware. In next few months it will be interesting to see how the relationship develops.

For the non-educational user I believe the formation of Xemplar is another indication of entrenchment in core areas which do not appear to be consumer-



*A simple equation — work out the result for yourself!*

oriented. Without access to the high street market, a lot of software houses will lack the interest to develop products for a shrinking market and diversify into alternative markets.

I know a lot of companies have said they will continue to support the Acorn market, but that is only support and not develop. The new development will come from the smaller 'cottage' software companies and from enthusiasts who will remain loyal regardless of the environment.

Acorn Education has done what it believes is necessary to survive and hopefully grow. Acorn will not disappear, but it will undoubtedly change and some of those changes are happening as you read. The Acorn we know at present will be a totally different beast in two years time.

## Java 2

Don't worry this is not a new version of 'Java' just another update on what is

happening with Sun's computer language, Java. This language has been giving rise to great excitement in the computer industry.

It is believed that Java will take the Internet into a newer dimension, a true multimedia environment. It has the ability to allow Java programs (called applets — doesn't that sound familiar to Acorn users?) to use multiple information sources in realtime animation and to incorporate a full suite of application tools such as spreadsheets, wordprocessors and databases.

The most important feature is that these are platform and hardware independent. This last feature is why so many companies are interested in Java and its potential uses. It is believed that Java is an opportunity to break the PC monopoly held by Intel and Microsoft. This is why companies like HP, IBM, Silicon graphics, Netscape Communications, Oracle and many others are strong supporters of the Java approach.



Elements of the Acorn Computer Group have been involved with Java as they have been developing (in conjunction with Oracle) an Internet Terminal based on the ARM7500 processor currently used in Acorn's A7000 computer.

Java is still evolving and defining itself — it currently lacks a full complement of development tools although there are number of software houses currently working to develop these. Its independence from particular hardware is one of its major strengths, however it is also a weakness since until Java-specific engines are developed in silicon, Java systems will be slow in terms of raw speed. It does not lend itself to being an operating system. These are early days and developments are running at pace.

There are a few clouds on the horizon as there are a number of competitors who are developing alternative solutions. AT&T are developing a 'Java-like' product and Microsoft is busy on a number of fronts, right from licensing Java to working on

major developments of its *Visual Basic* product to make it suitable for developing Internet applications. So watch this space!

For those of you with Internet access and the ability to run Netscape 2.0 may wish to investigate the following web site URL:

<http://www.gamelan.com/>

for Java demos or if you want to find out more type 'Java' in your search engine!

Well that just about wraps it up for another session.

I'd just like to leave you with another piece of homespun wisdom:

In an insane universe, sanity would be described as 'utter madness'.

Seeya & have fun!

*Steve Arnold*

---

## **PD Library CD-ROM Offer**

Last September, Club PD Librarian Nick Evans compiled an Acorn CD-ROM containing the entire contents of our PD Library at that time.

Since then, thanks to your efforts and his own, Nick has received a very large quantity of new PD software and is in the process of putting together a second CD-ROM. This has the same objective as the first, to include as much as possible on the disc and not holding anything back for future discs. The second CD-ROM will be ready for release soon, possibly in time for our Cambridge Open Day.

In the meantime, members only can obtain our first CD-ROM at the special price of £15 including postage and packing. No VAT to pay. Just send your cheque or postal order, quoting your membership number, to the The ARM Club FREEPOST address and you will receive a copy by return post.





Geoff Stilwell reports on developments at  
the annual education treat held back in January

---

I remember that last year I had time to spend three whole days at the BETT Exhibition and I still felt that there was more to see. This year I only had one day to take in the whole event. How was I going to manage?

I actually started the day on the Microsoft stand ('Horror of horrors!' I hear all you Acorn enthusiasts cry). The fact is that I am currently trying to find work as an IT Consultant/Trainer and I was primarily aiming at the schools using Acorn equipment.

However, despite the dire need for people like myself, there does not seem to be enough money in education at the moment. So I am training adults to use *Word* and *Excel* for Windows. I was asking the Microsoft people how I could get to be a Microsoft Certified Professional (several people said to me afterwards that I should be certified if I want to use Microsoft products!). I was quite interested in the Microsoft On Line Institute (MOLI for short) where one can obtain training direct from the Internet with on line tutors, materials, even a students' union. But I would need Windows '95 and be connected via the Microsoft Network.

The Acorn Education stand seemed to be extremely busy. Some said it was the busiest of all the stands at the Show. The layout of the stand was unusual in that, rather than having one counter, there were many little individual stands, each with a black computer and an Acorn representative, and all of them were very busy. I stopped only to chat to one of the girls who recognised me, and gave me another of the smart pens that Clan members received as a free gift at Acorn World. (Does anyone know where to get refills for those?).

I did notice Gordon Taylor, who normally represents Computer Concepts, on the Acorn stand, whereas Computer Concepts were conspicuous by their absence, as were Colton Software.

Moving into the Acorn Village I met up with Marshal Anderson. Last year Marshal won a Gold Award for his *Music Box* program. No awards this year but there was evidence of his programming talents on the *Topologika* and *Resource* stands. Topologika were selling his *MathsBook* program which simulates a child's Maths exercise book. They were also selling The ARM Club's very own graphic artist, Christopher Jarman's *Art Lesson* CD ROM. I wasn't able to see

Marshal's other Music application on the Resource stand.

At the Creative Curriculum Software stand I stopped to chat to Ian Goodall. He was using a light-pen to read the bar-coded, pre-registered lapel badges of the people who came to the stand. I observed the way that Ian very carefully handled the badges pinned to the chests of the ladies, whereas the ladies seemed to enjoy the sensation of being 'swiped'!

Creative Curriculum were demonstrating their newest product, 'Magic Maths'. This is a simple idea given a new presentation; basic maths activities, 4 rules, percentages and fractions, built around a snakes and ladders game. In their new catalogue I noticed a few new CD ROMs 'Tanzania' about life in a Tanzanian village, 'Moving Eye: Transport' a set of three CDs containing video clips of roads and motorways with associated activities, and 'Castles In Context'.

I stopped at the Acorn User stand to subscribe to their newish publication 'Parents and Computing' and met up with John Stonier and Mark Empson of the Welwyn & Hatfield Computer Club and Digital Databank BBS. John and Mark were talking about how they would be 'On Line' at the ARM Club Open Days at Belmont at the end of January, and again at Lancing at the end of March [*They were online and did a brilliant job, thanks guys! — Ed*].

At the Sherston stand I was very keen to see a demonstration of the new Speech Recognition system they had been working on in collaboration with the Defence Research Agency. Bill Bonham was presenting two children, aged about 7, from local schools, reading one of Sherston's Talking Book stories. The children were fitted with headset microphones and as they read, the words became highlighted on the screen showing that the computer had recognised the children's voices. Bill

# BETT '96

ONLINE



*The '96 Web Site. Here you will find all the information necessary to answer your questions or put you in touch with a visiting Research Fellow at Kings College School of Education. He has been a teacher in primary, secondary and special schools and is widely known on IT in education.*

*You will normally receive a reply within 24 hours.*

**Read recent Q&A Emails to Chris Abbot**

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*BETT on the Net for the very first time*

Bonham went on to say that the software was currently quite successful in recognising many different kinds of speech patterns, children and adults. The two accents that were currently proving difficult were Glaswegian and Geordie, not surprisingly! Of course the technology is still in its infancy but Sherston are at the leading edge and the potential is amazing.

Upstairs I called at the SEMERC stand and was shown their new 'Pictorial Spreadsheet' program, 'Maths Frames'. The program presents scenarios, a supermarket or garden centre, where children can choose items from the shelves and place them in their shopping trolley. A till shows a running total of the value of the purchases. The display can also be a table or graph.

Nearby were Peter and Pauline Worley or *ERIC International*. Peter demonstrated their newest product, AppLaunch, a front end or application launcher. The program presents only the applications and/or directories to which teachers want children to have access. Passwords protect accessing other parts of the hard drive preventing children from reconfiguring the machine or deleting important files.

This year I joined the National Association for Coordinators and Teachers of Information Technology (ACITT). ACITT provides various services, conferences, seminars and a termly magazine 'InTegrate'. Although ACITT are cross-platform they were demonstrating a joint Microsoft/ACITT

initiative called *Microsoft Office For Teachers*. I was particularly interested in this as I teach Microsoft products and could also see its use in schools where PCs are the preferred system.

I stopped at the SoftEase stand to receive a promised copy of the newest version of Talking TextEase 2 that has been doing so well in every review of it I've seen so far. After using it extensively myself I can only add my congratulations to Club

Educational Computing & Technology Awards 1996	
Primary Software	
<b>Gold</b>	The World of Robert Burns Cambridgeshire Software House
<b>Silver</b>	Guardians Of The Greenwood - 4Mation
<b>Bronze</b>	Mission Control: Crystal Rainforest 2 Sherston Software
Secondary Software	
<b>Gold</b>	Hyperstudio - TAG Developments
<b>Silver</b>	Aspects Of Religion - YITM
<b>Bronze</b>	AVP Picture Base - AVP
Hardware	
<b>Gold</b>	Risc PC - Acorn Computers
<b>Silver</b>	RM SEMERC Window Box Research Machines & SEMERC
<b>Silver</b>	RM Infant Window Box Research Machines
Special Needs	
<b>Gold</b>	Switch Clicker Plus Crick Computing
<b>Silver</b>	Talk Write - Resource
<b>Bronze</b>	Claude & Maud Brilliant Computing
Services	
<b>Gold</b>	RM IFL Internet For Learning Research Machines
<b>Silver</b>	IT Learning Exchange University of North London

member Geoff Titmuss for such an excellent program. Geoff did in fact give me two copies of TextEase, the other to

be used as a prize in an ARM Club competition. Read how you can win your own copy of TextEase down below just by answering a few simple questions!

At the Dalriada stand I spent a long time chatting to George Buchanan, the author of *Tablemate*, *DiagramIt* and *GraphIt*. I had been using DiagramIt and wanted to suggest a few improvements and enhancements, however, some of them were mathematically very difficult although others were planned to be included in a future release.

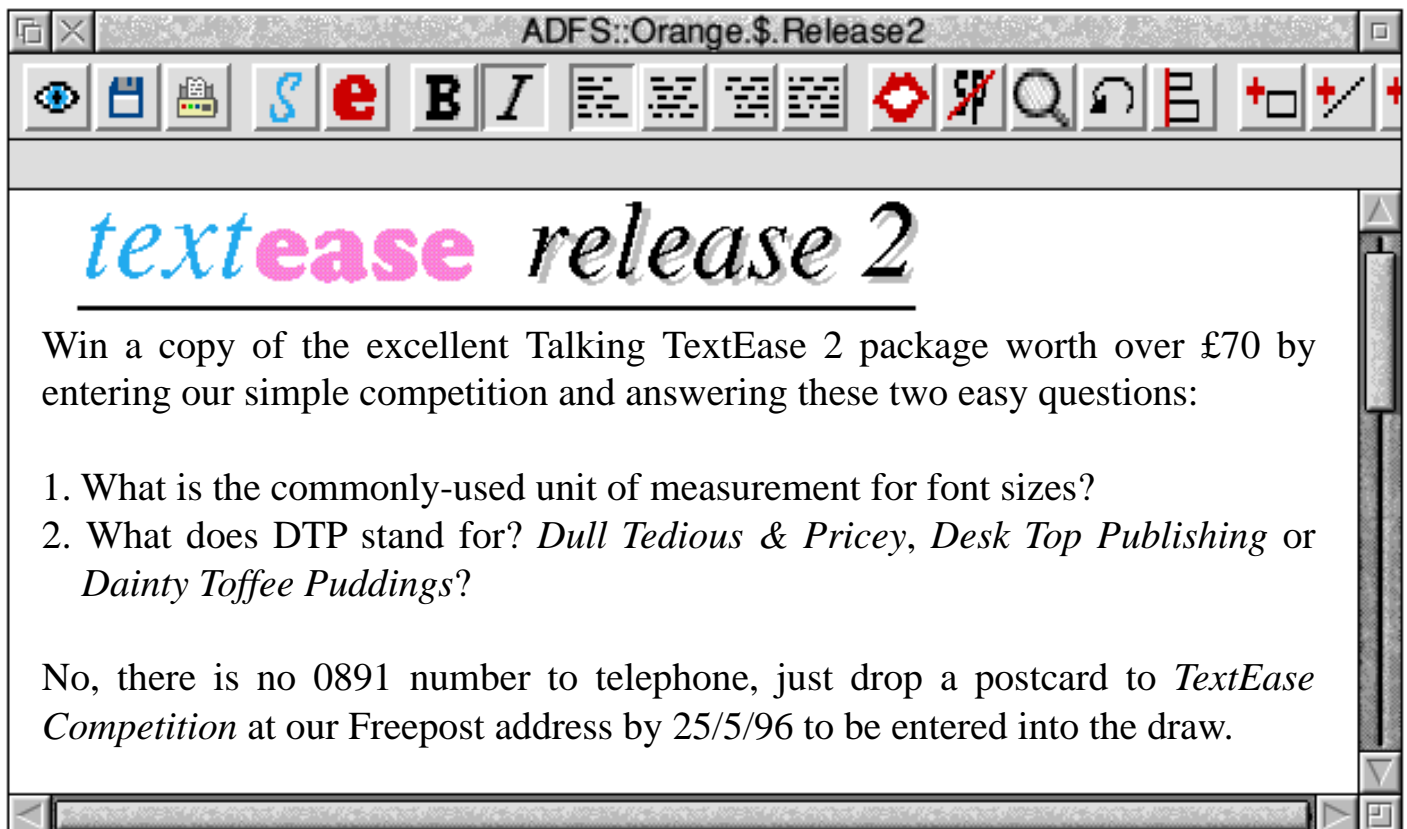
One thing that I didn't notice being publicised very well this year was the Educational Computing & Technology Magazine Awards for Software and Hardware. I went directly to the EC&T Magazine stand where I met Phil Martin, the Editor, who gave me a complete list.

The table below shows there were no dramatic surprises, although a new category for Services was added this year by popular demand and will be included in future years.

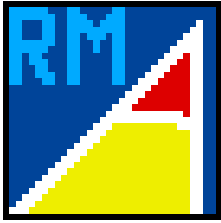
The question was: 'Did I see everything?' The answer has to be 'no'. I covered the ground and went down every aisle but I couldn't stop to take in what was being displayed. My advice to Teachers with only one day (if that) to see everything would be to plan ahead if possible. But there is always something unexpected or someone who is very interesting to talk to. Oh, for time to talk again!

*Geoff Stilwell*

*Geoff Stilwell is our recently retired Club Secretary and Education Consultant. He can be contacted via the Club FREEPOST address.*



The screenshot shows a web browser window with the title bar 'ADFS::Orange.\$\$.Release2'. The address bar is empty. The toolbar contains various icons for file operations and editing. The main content area displays the text 'textease release 2' in a stylized font, with 'textease' in blue and pink and 'release 2' in a grey, shadowed font. Below this, the text reads: 'Win a copy of the excellent Talking TextEase 2 package worth over £70 by entering our simple competition and answering these two easy questions:'. A list of two questions follows: '1. What is the commonly-used unit of measurement for font sizes?' and '2. What does DTP stand for? *Dull Tedious & Pricey, Desk Top Publishing or Dainty Toffee Puddings?*'. At the bottom, it says: 'No, there is no 0891 number to telephone, just drop a postcard to *TextEase Competition* at our Freepost address by 25/5/96 to be entered into the draw.'



# Writing RISC OS Modules Part 3

*Mark Smith delves into more exciting aspects of programming*

## RISC OS Vectors

Vectors are used to attach, replace or extend standard RISC OS routines. By attaching code within one of your modules to a vector, you may change the behaviour of certain SWIs or respond to certain occurrences which result in interrupts or events being triggered. Interrupts are hardware triggered by devices within the computer whilst events are software generated, sometimes as a result of certain interrupts.

Vectors are usually claimed using the SWI OS\_Claim and released once they are finished with using OS\_Release. There may be more than one routine attached to a vector at any one time. In this case, the last claimant will be run first and can either pass on control to the previous claimant or return to the caller. In the latter case, the routine is said to intercept the vector. There will always be at least one routine attached to each vector — that is the default one in the RISC OS ROM.

### SWI OS\_Claim & OS\_Release

On Entry: R0=Vector number

R1=Address of routine

R2=Value passed into routine in R12

On Exit: R0-R2 preserved

The entry and exit conditions for these two SWIs are shown above. A vector is released by calling SWI OS\_Release with identical values in R0, R1 and R2 as were used when calling SWI OS\_Claim. Here is a selection of some commonly used vectors:

&01	ErrorV	Error Vector (OS_GenerateError)
&02	IrqV	Interrupt Vector
&03	WrchV	Write character Vector (OS_WriteC)
&04	RdchV	Read character Vector (OS_ReadC)
&05	CLIV	Command line interpret- er Vector (OS_CLI)
&06	ByteV	OS_Byte Vector
&07	WordV	OS_Word Vector
&10	EventV	Event Vector (OS_GenerateEvent)

## Events

The one we are most interested in for the purposes of this issue's example is the event vector. Routines attached to this vector are run every time an event occurs. There are 27 currently defined events which include:

- An output buffer (eg printer buffer) has become empty.



- An input buffer (eg keyboard buffer) has become full Electron beam has reached last displayed line (display vertical sync.)
- Mouse buttons have changed state.

Each event can be enabled or disabled. If an event is enabled, every time the condition triggering that event occurs, the routines attached to the event vector will be called in turn, starting with the last one attached to the vector until one of the routines intercepts the vector (returns control to the caller) or all routines have been called. As routines are normally written to respond to one or two specific events, the first thing you must check is whether the event that has occurred is of interest to your code.

Every event is assigned a number. In the case of the four examples above, these are 0, 1, 4 and 10 respectively. The event code will be entered with R0 holding the event number and other registers holding additional information, depending on the event. R12 will hold the value passed to "OS\_Claim" in R2, so if you need to pass a workspace pointer to your event code, that is the way to do it. So, to do check for a specific event, the first two instructions of your routine will typically be:

```
TEQ R0,#event_number
/ Check event no. is the one we want
MOVNES PC,R14
/ Pass on event if it isn't
```

This way, events which your module doesn't respond to are passed on to the

The ARM Club Magazine page 25

previous event vector claimant quickly and efficiently.

## Mouse Fixer

To demonstrate the principles of RISC OS events and to give you an idea of what you can do with them, Example5 is the source for a utility module which restricts pointer movement to horizontally only if you hold down the H key or vertically only if you hold down the V key. This might be useful to draw horizontal or vertical straight lines in a package such as Draw or Paint without having to make use of a gridlock facility. The original idea and source is courtesy of Club member, Geoff Lane.

The event of interest is 11 - key pressed or released. The mouse pointer movement is restricted by setting the mouse multiplier (how far the pointer moves for a given mouse movement) to zero for the direction in which we want to prevent pointer movement. When either of the keys is released, the corresponding mouse multiplier is reset to the default stored in CMOS RAM which is read when the module is initialised. Because of this, it is not a good idea to try setting the default mouse multiplier using !Configure whilst this module is active as pressing and releasing H or V will reset the corresponding multiplier to the old setting.

The module requires 4 bytes of workspace, 1 to hold the default multiple read from CMOS RAM and 3 to hold the data passed to OS\_Word which is used to change the mouse multiplier. I have

previously explained how to claim memory using OS\_Module, but on this occasion we don't need to this. That's because 4 bytes are given to each module in its Private Word (pointed to by R12 when any of the module's entry points are called), normally used to hold a pointer to workspace claimed using OS\_Module. As that's all we need, we can use it directly.

The initialisation routine first reads the default mouse multiplier from byte 194 in CMOS RAM using OS\_Byte 161 (OS\_Byte with R0 set to 161 on entry). It then stores that in the last byte of the module's private word and sets up the block which will be passed to OS\_Word 21 to re-program the mouse multipliers in the first three bytes. This block is maintained, with the relevant multiplier set each time one of the keys is pressed or released before OS\_Word is called so that the module behaves as expected whichever combination of H and V is pressed at any time. If both are pressed simultaneously, the pointer is locked in the current position. It is assumed that neither key is pressed when the module initialised, although it doesn't really matter as normal operation would take effect as soon as both keys were released anyway. Having set up the private word, OS\_Claim is used to claim the event vector and event 11 is enabled using OS\_Byte 14.

When the module is finalised, event 11 is disabled using OS\_Byte 13 (although if more than one application enables an event, it won't actually be disabled until all have called OS\_Byte 13, so the event

will remain enabled for as long as any claimants are interested in it). The event vector is then released. Note that this *\*must\** be done before the module is removed from memory, otherwise RISC OS will continue to try running code at the same address whenever an event occurs. Once the module is removed, that memory is likely to be overwritten by something else or even removed completely and so it is likely that the computer would crash if it tried to run whatever happened to be at the address. Because of this, if the call to OS\_Release returns an error, this is passed back by the finalisation routine which will prevent the module from being removed.

The event routine itself first checks that event 11 has occurred - we are not interested in anything else. Then the key number in R2 is checked - &41 is H and &51 is V, anything else and we are not interested. If the key in question is H or V then we need to know if the key is being pressed or released. This information is held in R1. It is zero if the key is being released, in which case we want to set the mouse multiplier back to the default. Otherwise, the multiplier is set to zero. Finally, OS\_Word 21 is called to change the mouse multipliers before control is passed to the previous event vector claimant.

*Mark Smith*

*Mark will continue this series next issue. If you wish to contact Mark, please email [mark@armclub.org.uk](mailto:mark@armclub.org.uk) or write to the Club Freepost address.*

***The source code for the example Mouse Fix module. Also on the Eureka disc!***

```
REM >Example5

REM By Geoff Lane, December 1995
REM Modifications by Mark Smith, April 1996
REM May be freely copied and used.

DIM space% 512
start=0:init=0:final=0:service=0:table=0

FOR A%=4 TO 6 STEP 2
  P%=0
  O%=space%
  [OPT A%
  \_____
  EQUd start
  EQUd init
  EQUd final
  EQUd service
  EQUd title
  EQUd help
  EQUd table
  \_____
  .title
  EQU$ "MouseFix"+CHR$0
  \_____
  .help
  EQU$ "Fix Mouse"+CHR$9+"2.00 (12 Apr 1996)"+CHR$0
  \_____
  .table
  EQU$ "MouseFix"+CHR$0
  ALIGN
  EQUd 0
  EQUd 0
  EQUd 0
  EQUd mousefixhelp
  EQUb 0
  \_____
  .mousefixhelp
  EQU$ CHR$10+CHR$13
  EQU$ "This module fixes the mouse pointer"+CHR$10+CHR$13
  EQU$ "Press H to lock across "+CHR$10+CHR$13
  EQU$ "Press V to lock up/down"+CHR$10+CHR$13
  EQU$ "Press C to CANCEL"+CHR$0
  ALIGN
  \_____
```

```

.init
STMFD R13!,{r14 }
\ Store return address
MOV R0,#161
MOV R1,#194
SWI "XOS_Byte"
MOVVS R2,#3
STRB R2,[R12,#3]
\ Read default mouse multiplier from CMOS RAM and store in
\ 4th byte of private word
MOV R0,#2
STRB R0,[R12]
STRB R2,[R12,#1]
STRB R2,[R12,#2]
\ Set up OS_Word 21,2 block assuming that neither H or V is
pressed
\ in first three bytes of the module's private word
MOV R0,#16
ADR R1,eventroutine
MOV R2,R12
SWI "XOS_Claim"
LDMVSFD R13!,{pc }
\ Claim event vector
MOV R0,#14
MOV R1,#11
SWI "XOS_Byte"
LDMVSFD R13!,{pc }
\ Make sure key up/down event is enabled
LDMFD R13!,{pc }^
\ Return
\_____
.final
STMFD R13!,{r14 }
\ Store return address
MOV R0,#13
MOV R1,#11
SWI "XOS_Byte"
\ Disable key up/down event if nothing else is using it
MOV R0,#16
ADR R1,eventroutine
MOV R2,R12
SWI "XOS_Release"
LDMVSFD R13!,{pc }
\ Release event vector
LDMFD R13!,{pc }^
\ Return
\_____
.eventroutine

```

```

    TEQ R0,#11
    MOVNES PC,R14
    \ Check first that this is a key up/down event - return if
not
    TEQ R2,#&41
    BEQ horiz
    \ Check for H key up/down
    TEQ R2,#&51
    BEQ vert
    \ Check for V key up/down
    MOVS PC,R14
    \ Return
    \_____
    .horiz
    STMFD R13!,{r0-r1 ,R14}
    \ Save R0, R1 and return address
    TEQ R1,#0
    LDREQB R0,[R12,#3]
    MOVNE R0,#0
    STRB R0,[R12,#2]
    \ Update y mouse multiplier depending on key being pressed
or released
    MOV R0,#21
    MOV R1,R12
    SWI "XOS_Word"
    \ Set new multipliers
    LDMFD R13!,{r0-r1 ,PC}^
    \_____
    .vert
    STMFD R13!,{r0-r1 ,R14}
    \ Save R0, R1 and return address
    TEQ R1,#0
    LDREQB R0,[R12,#3]
    MOVNE R0,#0
    STRB R0,[R12,#1]
    \ Update x mouse multiplier depending on key being pressed
or released
    MOV R0,#21
    MOV R1,R12
    SWI "XOS_Word"
    \ Set new multipliers
    LDMFD R13!,{r0-r1 ,PC}^
    \_____
    ]:NEXT
OSCLI "SAVE $.MouseFix "+STR$~space%+" "+STR$~0%
OSCLI "SETTYPE $.MouseFix FFA"

```





# ImageFS 2

The latest version of the popular image transformation package reviewed by Simon Burrows

The original version of ImageFS, produced by Alternative Publishing, was widely acclaimed for its technical ingenuity and general usefulness.

When I reviewed it back in Eureka 15, my overall impression was of a great product with just a few rough edges but lots of scope for future enhancements to make it even more useful.

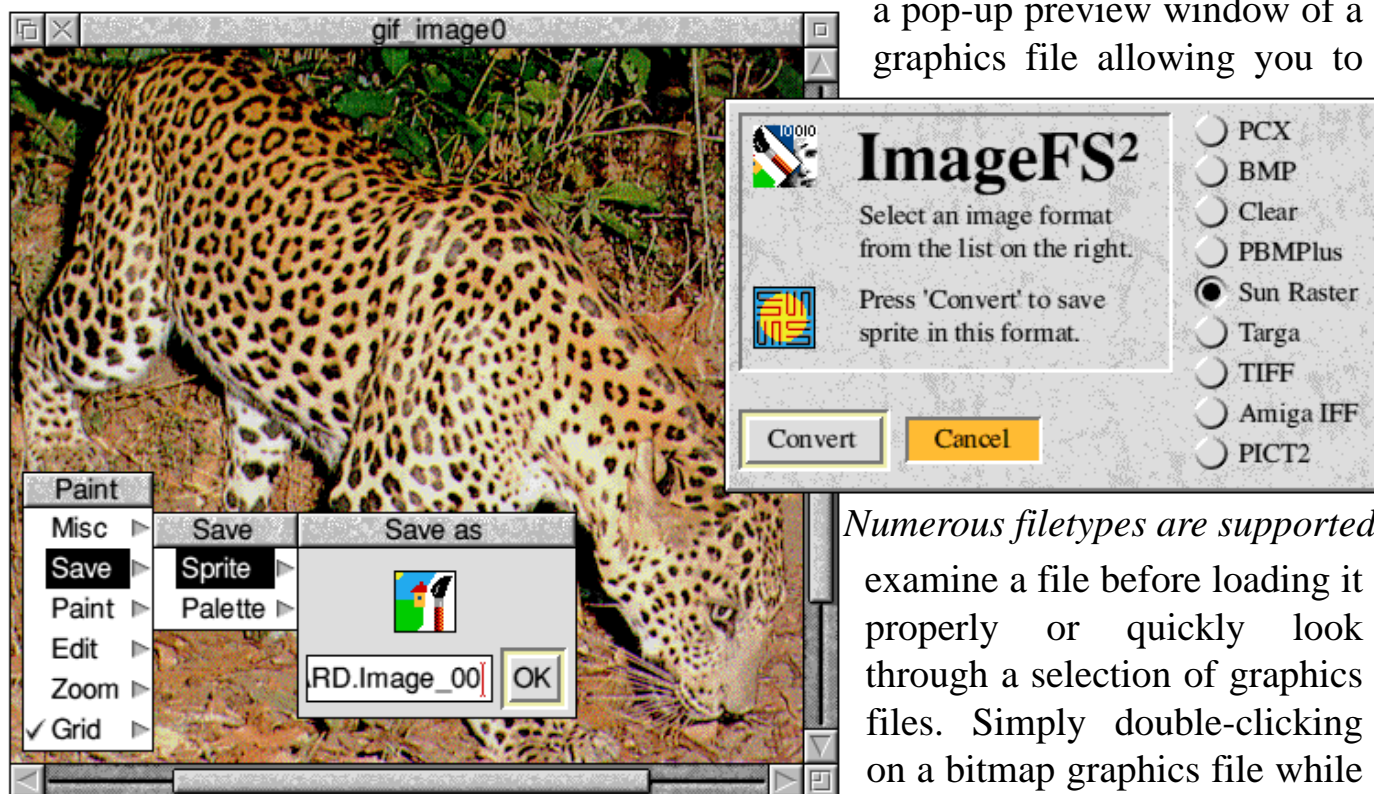
Briefly recapping what exactly ImageFS does, it sits in the background on your Archimedes or Risc PC allowing foreign bitmap graphics files (eg those created on other computers) to be treated just like sprites and be loaded into any package which can handle sprite files.

This removes the need to convert the foreign file into a sprite before loading it into your package.

## What's new?

The most significant new feature in version 2 of ImageFS is the ability to save foreign graphics files as well as load them. A list of currently supported filetypes is shown below. To save a file in a foreign format, all you have to do is hold down the ALT key when dragging a sprite icon from the save box of an application to a filer window. A window, is opened automatically, giving the choice of converting the sprite file to a more exotic format.

Another new feature is the ability to see a pop-up preview window of a graphics file allowing you to



*Numerous filetypes are supported* examine a file before loading it properly or quickly look through a selection of graphics files. Simply double-clicking on a bitmap graphics file while

holding down the CTRL key opens up a preview window as shown below. This facility can be very useful although is not really suitable for use on slow filing systems such as CD-ROM or Econet networks. It is also handy for previewing sprites — as soon as the mouse pointer is moved away from the preview window, the view disappears.

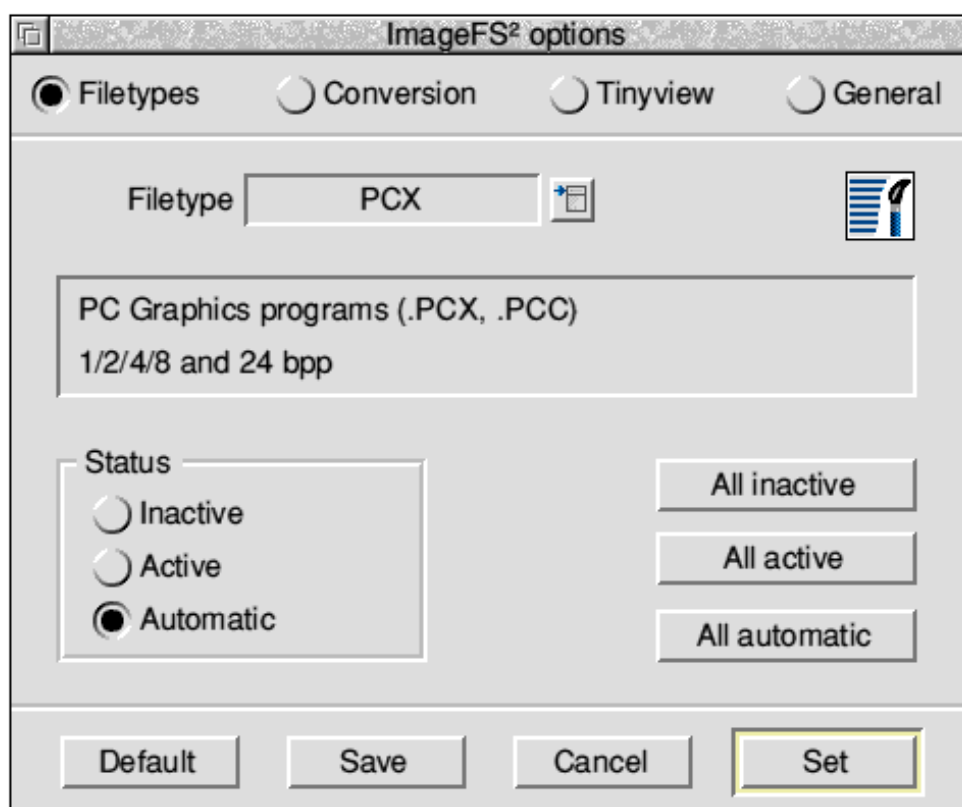
If you compare the list of graphics formats supported by ImageFS 2, you will see that it is longer than that of the earlier version. Also some of the restrictions affecting particular filetypes (for example the inability to read certain variants of a few formats) have been reduced or eliminated. It is a pity that ImageFS 2 cannot handle JPEG (or more correctly, JFIF) format files, this is

3.60 includes built-in support for JPEG files and this functionality should be available to all Risc PC owners later this year. The other notable format not supported is PhotoCD, although users of the Impression family of products can load these files (plus JPEG, TIFF and Clear) using the Computer Concepts Graphics Loader package.

## User Interface

At a basic level, ImageFS 2 is very easy to use. Once loaded, it is possible to forget about the package and simply treat foreign bitmap files like sprites when dragging them into applications. A few badly written packages may still not recognise the foreign formats, in which case double-clicking on the bitmap file while holding down SHIFT causes it to

open like a directory, revealing a sprite file inside which can be dragged into the badly written application just like any other sprite.



*The configuration options are extensive in ImageFS 2*

because they would require a different technical approach due to using so-called lossy compression. Fortunately RISC OS The ARM Club Magazine page 31

While a foreign bitmap file is being converted into a sprite, ImageFS 2 displays a conversion window (which can be disabled if desired) showing the status of the conversion and its state of completion. This enables the user to press ESCAPE to abandon the conversion if required. In general, ImageFS is very fast at converting bitmap files into sprites which is a great boon.



When loaded, ImageFS 2 displays its own startup banner. This is badly designed and unattractive, even making use of flashing text! There is no easy way to stop the banner from being displayed, particularly annoying if you wish to load ImageFS 2 in your startup !Boot file. There is a desktop front-end allowing the various features of ImageFS to be configured, however once this has been done the front-end can be removed from the icon bar and ImageFS remains active (it is a module task).

There are four main configuration windows for optimising ImageFS 2. Each is accessed by clicking on a radio switch — not exactly RISC OS Style compliant but actually quite intuitive and easy to use. These windows are titled Filetypes, Conversion, Tinyview and General.

The Filetypes window gives information about the various file formats recognised by ImageFS, and allows the user to set how each is handled by the system. For example, if there is a particular filetype that you wish ImageFS to ignore because it is handled by a different application, support for this can be turned off independently for each file format.

The Conversion window contains options for controlling the output from



*A Tinyview popup window*

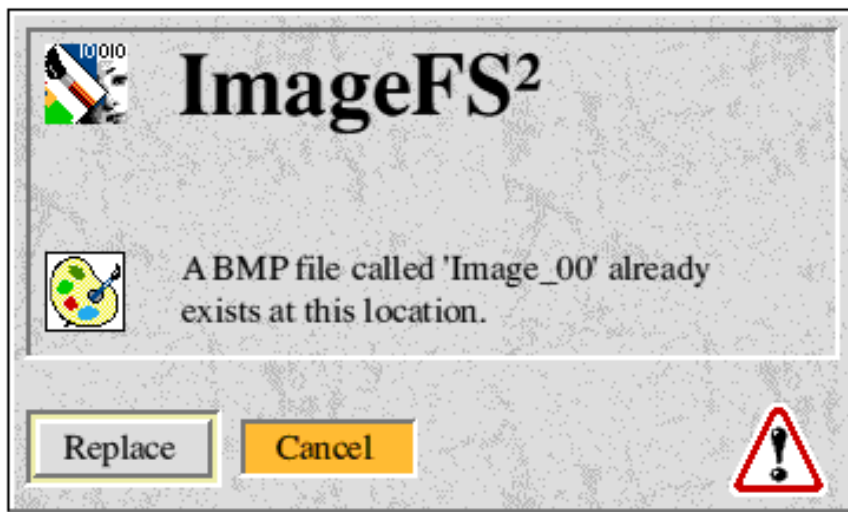
ImageFS; these include whether the old or new (32bpp) sprite format should be used, the type of pixel aspect, diffusion technique and handling of palettes. One option decides whether ordinary filenames should be used when converting files or else longer, more descriptive filenames based on information contained in the files.

*Tinyview* is the name given by Alternative Publishing to the fast preview facility of ImageFS 2. As mentioned earlier, double-clicking on any supported filetype (including sprite files) while holding down the CTRL key opens a popup preview window showing a quick rendering of the picture. I find this particularly handy for seeing what sprite files look like without needing to load them into !Paint or similar. The Tinyview window allows various aspects of this facility to be user-altered.

Finally the General window contains miscellaneous options, including the ability to automatically close files when they have been accessed, important for shared filing systems (eg peer-to-peer network systems). ImageFS implements its own zoombox facility by which its windows appear on screen, this facility can be disabled from the General window. An unfortunate effect of the way windows are implemented is that all



ImageFS windows have a background texture (a la Risc PC), even if you have turned off this facility in RISC OS itself.



*An ImageFS window with flashing icons and enforced background window texture!*

### Copy protection

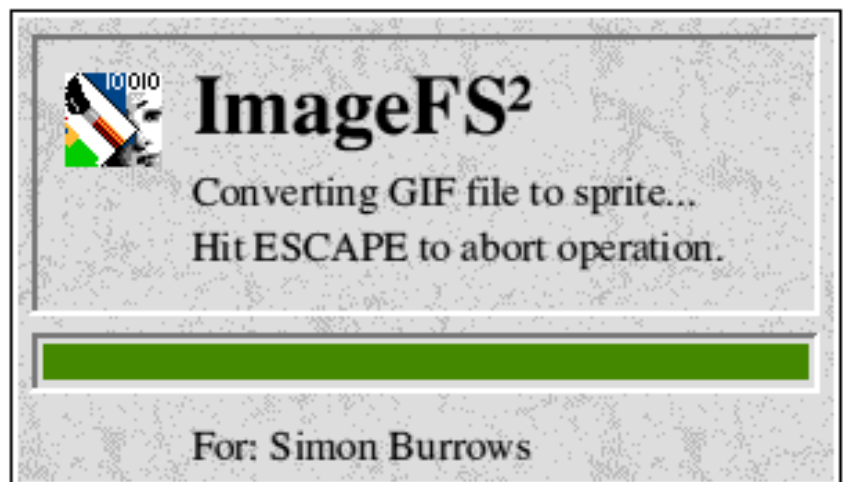
Illegal copying of software is a big problem, however regrettably ImageFS 2 uses a copy protection system whereby it is locked to a particular hard disc and machine. It is possible to deinstall the application from your hard disc and place it on another machine or hard disc, however I believe this system of copy protection is unnecessarily intrusive and problematic for the legitimate user. Alternative Publishing do appreciate that this protection is unacceptable for some users and hence will supply an unprotected copy on request, branded with your user name and other details.

### Other features

Another useful feature of ImageFS 2 makes it possible to drop a bitmap

graphics file of unknown format and filetype onto its icon, upon which ImageFS 2 examines the file and sets its filetype appropriately. This is very helpful for users of bulletin boards and the Internet who receive unknown format graphics files.

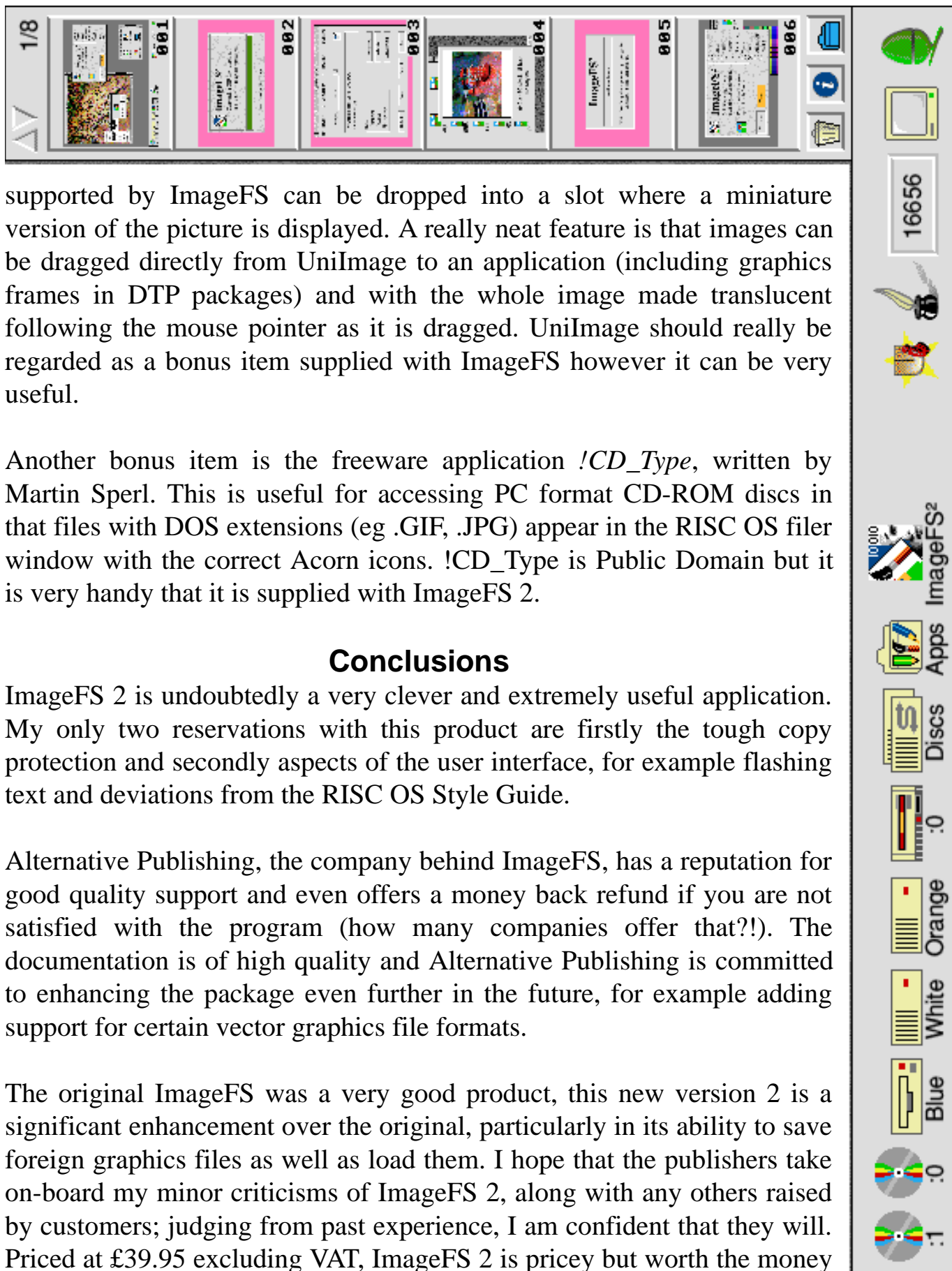
When I first started using ImageFS 2, I found the various configuration options a bit confusing and non-intuitive. Apart from the manual, which is clear, concise and well-written, ImageFS 2 supports Acorn's interactive !Help facility. Excellent, if only more companies would make use of interactive help!



*The status window which pops up while file conversions are taking place...*

### Bonus software

An application called UniImage (shown overleaf) is supplied on the ImageFS 2 floppy disc. This is basically a thumbnail application, displaying a column of slots up the right hand side of the desktop screen. Any bitmap graphics format



supported by ImageFS can be dropped into a slot where a miniature version of the picture is displayed. A really neat feature is that images can be dragged directly from UniImage to an application (including graphics frames in DTP packages) and with the whole image made translucent following the mouse pointer as it is dragged. UniImage should really be regarded as a bonus item supplied with ImageFS however it can be very useful.

Another bonus item is the freeware application *!CD\_Type*, written by Martin Sperl. This is useful for accessing PC format CD-ROM discs in that files with DOS extensions (eg .GIF, .JPG) appear in the RISC OS filer window with the correct Acorn icons. *!CD\_Type* is Public Domain but it is very handy that it is supplied with ImageFS 2.

## Conclusions

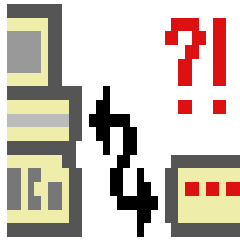
ImageFS 2 is undoubtedly a very clever and extremely useful application. My only two reservations with this product are firstly the tough copy protection and secondly aspects of the user interface, for example flashing text and deviations from the RISC OS Style Guide.

Alternative Publishing, the company behind ImageFS, has a reputation for good quality support and even offers a money back refund if you are not satisfied with the program (how many companies offer that?!). The documentation is of high quality and Alternative Publishing is committed to enhancing the package even further in the future, for example adding support for certain vector graphics file formats.

The original ImageFS was a very good product, this new version 2 is a significant enhancement over the original, particularly in its ability to save foreign graphics files as well as load them. I hope that the publishers take on-board my minor criticisms of ImageFS 2, along with any others raised by customers; judging from past experience, I am confident that they will. Priced at £39.95 excluding VAT, ImageFS 2 is pricey but worth the money if you regularly handle graphics files produced on other computers.

*Simon Burrows*





# A Magical Mystery Tour

Geoff Lane tells a tale of intrigue & discovery

One cold and snowy Saturday in February, Christmas was just a distant memory, some of the bills were out of the way and my daughter Claudia and I were discussing communications, Bulletin Boards and the Internet.

The discussion didn't last too long, off we went and bought a US Robotics Sportster 14.4 modem to be connected to our A3010 machine. Our feelings were mixed, we were both excited at the prospect of being able to communicate directly with fellow computer enthusiasts, we were excited at the prospect of communicating with Bulletin Boards, we were excited at the prospect of Emails.

Our excitement was equally counterbalanced by our trepidation as to what my lovely wife Marianne would say at our spending £!/?\* on more computer wizardry when she could name a dozen items about the house that required money. Ah well, it's done now and the experience since has been amazing.

## Getting started

After connecting up all the wires and disposing of the multitude of useless PC disks and offers we were ready to try. Our first attempt was to fellow ARM  
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Club member John Stonier's *Digital DataBank* Bulletin Board which we had been told is excellent. We were not to be disappointed, we connected first time, followed the instructions on the screen to register and then away we went on a MAGICAL MYSTERY TOUR.

## What's what?

The main screen presents you with a number of options, very well explained to me by another fellow ARM Club member, Mark Empson, as being like a Hotel Foyer. From here, by pressing different keys you can move to various floors of the hotel, then into different apartments and then to separate rooms and always be able to return immediately to the Foyer by pressing one key. On each floor and in each room there are various bulletin board facilities that may take your fancy.

What is on offer? Messages are the bread and butter work of Bulletin Boards, these can be between users of the same Bulletin Board or via Email to anyone who has an Email address. Text files and program files (though, not commercial files, this may be illegal) can be sent via the same system, even to poor souls who own PCs.

The Emails are stored on John's system

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and sent en mass at about 5.00am in the morning, John gets up early specially to do this, xxxx NO xxxx, I'm only joking, he stays tucked up in bed and his system automatically does it. Each time you log on you are advised of your messages which can be read there and then, downloaded onto a text file or read before you log off.

Files are available to be downloaded (copied) in the same manner as our own PD library files are available, games, clip art, applications etc are all there. Probably the most fascinating feature found to date is the *Virtual Cafe*, if you enter this area up to 4 persons can have a keyboard 'chat' with each other (I remember doing similar in the 60's on a telex machine), the screen divides and a title bar shows your area and then you just carry on a keyboard conversation with whoever is there, the input just appears on the screen, my own experience is that two is great, more can be confusing.

John Stonier is an excellent Sysop (systems operator), when using the computer himself he will often scan his system and if he notices anyone having difficulty with something he can break in with a typed message and offer help, he can also be paged via the bulletin board and if available will come on line with help. Bearing in mind the popularity of certain bulletin boards, Claudia's user number is over 2000, it is a requirement that time logged on be restricted, otherwise it would be nigh on impossible to get through, John currently has 4 phone lines and he can get over 200 calls

on a busy day, usually weekends, his limit is 60 minutes per day.

What do you need to get online?

- a very understanding wife, mother, husband or father.

- a modem — as software support for Acorn machines is lacking, I would suggest choosing a US Robotics modem as they are known to work OK. The 14.4K models are currently quite cheap, about £100 but are slower at transmitting data than the more expensive 28.8K models. They can all send and receive data from each other.

- comms software, commercially available at about £80 or *Connector* is free (price of disc and handling charge) from PD libraries, remember our own, I use Connector.

- a hard disc is useful but I haven't got one yet and a decent bit of RAM is also useful. The enjoyment and benefits are endless but beware the phone bills, local calls are 1p per minute at weekends, any other time they are more expensive, so be warned.

John's Bulletin Board number is 01707 323531 (Welwyn Garden City, Herts) which is a local call from London. Arcade is another popular board in the London Area and the number is 0181 655 4412 (London). There are others in different parts of the country so find a local one (to keep the phone bills down) and have fun.

*Geoff and Claudia Lane*

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# Local User Group News

More Reports from Club Members on some local group activities

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## **The North-West London Computer Club**

In the Spring of last year, our very own ARM Club Secretary, Geoff Stilwell, decided to create a new computer club/user group in his home area of Kilburn in North West London. He found a suitable venue in a community centre just up the road from 'Chateau Geoff' and arranged to use a room there one evening each month.

Thus the North-West London Computer Club was born, meeting at The Sidings Community Centre, Barlow Road, Kilburn on the third Thursday of each month between 7.30 and 10 pm. Although created under the auspices of the ARM Club, it is separate and autonomous, intended for users of all computer types and not just Acorns. I am a 'regular' there myself, even though I live south of London in Surrey.

The Club has rapidly established itself as a successful, compact group, and fits in well as part of the local community while also attracting people from further afield. It has a nice friendly feel and is not too serious most of the time, although we are well able to tackle serious matters like problem-solving when necessary.

Currently, meetings tend to comprise a

mixture of advice, 'hands on' demonstrations, up-to-date information (often much sooner than it appears in magazines) and individual assistance with problems, jargon or anything else that causes problems for computer users. There will usually be two or three Acorn computers set up, including a printer and CD-ROM player, along with a huge range of software of all types to try out. They also feature a 'library' of many current computer magazines and often some very tasty cakes!

So far, only Acorn users have become regular members of the club, probably because little publicity has as yet been given to the group apart from some much-appreciated support from the ARM Club. Our plans to attract non-Acorn users include more local publicity, and an upcoming programme of talks, demonstrations and training sessions on specific computing topics: these will be non-machine specific.

A recent example of individual assistance was when a handicapped boy, who lives close to the Centre, came with his parents to the Club so that we could set up his printer and show the whole family how to get the best from it. This is one of the most rewarding aspects of what we do: producing genuine benefits from what is after all an innately technical subject, yet without making it

technical for the user — surely the best possible approach.

There is no joining fee, and the only charge at each meeting is £2 to cover the cost of hiring the room.

Overall, then, the North-West London Computer Club fulfils the primary purposes of a group of its type. It also extends and broadens The Sidings Community Centre's goals of active and practical participation in the community, its needs are simple (a room, some tables and chairs, and electricity) and it has a forward-looking programme coming together for later in 1996 and beyond.

*John M Ward*

## **Suffolk Acorn Risc Club**

SARC is a friendly group for Acorn users in Suffolk with about 50 members comprising a mixture of experts, programmers, novices, business users, enthusiasts, students and teachers. New members are always welcome, whether they are experts or complete beginners — SARC is for everybody not just enthusiasts or programmers.

Features at recent meetings have included:

- Internet the ANT Way
- Musical Evening with Sibelius
- Design Your Own Newsletter
- Chris Cox on the Future of Acorn
- Online Media and Set Top Boxes
- Bring and Buy Sale

On 9th May 1996 SARC will be holding its Annual General Meeting with a Special Surprise Attraction.

All events are held at Ipswich Central Library. Meetings take place on the 2nd Thursday of each month at 7.00pm. Ipswich library is near the centre of town, within easy walking distance of the main bus and railway stations. The meetings are held in the upstairs meeting room which offers excellent facilities, but please use the side entrance in Old Foundry Road rather than the main entrance in Northgate Street.

For more information, please see our page on the World Wide Web at:

[http://www.thenet.co.uk/  
~octopus/sarc.html](http://www.thenet.co.uk/~octopus/sarc.html)

or contact me by electronic mail as [andyk@thenet.co.uk](mailto:andyk@thenet.co.uk). The address for conventional mail is Andy Keeble, Suffolk Acorn Risc Club, 35 Clive Avenue, IPSWICH, Suffolk IP1 4LU.

*Andy Keeble*

*Please keep sending in details of your local groups and activities. We will give any assistance we can in publicising what you do.*

*If you wish to know of the nearest local group to where you live, please contact us with details of your location. In Eureka 19 we plan to include a feature on the Wakefield Acorn Computer Group.*

# Electronic Mailing List

As part of the recent changes to the Club's Email addresses detailed elsewhere in this issue, we are introducing a mailing list which members can subscribe to in order to receive announcements from the club about upcoming events and other things of interest to members.

Any member wishing to subscribe to the list should send a message to [maillist@armclub.org.uk](mailto:maillist@armclub.org.uk) with a subject line of 'SIGNON announce', and including their membership number in the body of the message.

These messages will be processed automatically, and will also be copied to the membership secretary so that he can ensure that members' Email addresses are listed correctly in the Club database — anyone who doesn't want their database entry to include their Email address should say so in the body of their message.

If you have particular problems using our new Email system, please contact me as [postmaster@armclub.org.uk](mailto:postmaster@armclub.org.uk).

*Tom Hughes*

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## Can you help the Club?

The ARM Club is an independent user-group with the emphasis being on the USER. It is run by volunteers who devote some of their free time to the maintenance of the Club. They do this for free, ie they are unpaid volunteers.

These activities range from creating and publishing this magazine to giving up time for open days around the country. Have you ever wondered whether you could help? —No!

No, is the easy answer. No commitment, No responsibility. Easy life!

In fact it is much easier to help without any major commitment or responsibility than you would imagine.

We are looking for new helpers, people who would be willing to help in some aspect of running the Club.

You can help in various ways and at various levels of commitment.

This can be very minor (but never the less important) as stuffing some envelopes with magazines to a more important role as being on the Club's committee.

We need you! Don't be shy — send us a letter, Email us or even come and talk to us at an open day or show.

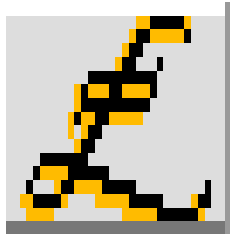
The Club is for USERS, run by USERS for the benefit of USERS.

*Steve Arnold, Club Chairman*

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# Personal Accounts

## Version 3

Ralph Sillett gets his books in order

I have used *Home Accounts* by Minerva for a few years now, however due to lack of time at the computer for one reason or another, my home account was not used regularly due to the amount of time it took to enter the details. After my wife took to writing our accounts down on paper, I thought that it was time there was a decent package that was both easy and quick to use. First I tried *Finance Manager* from Solloway Software which is fine for some people, but I just couldn't get on with it (Solloway will send you a demo version on request).

It was with some trepidation that I picked up a leaflet at the last Acorn User Show on *Personal Accounts V3*. It looked good (they always do on paper!) so a while ago I contacted Apricote Studios and after a lengthy chat with Quentin a copy was on its way to me albeit without the packaging due to a printing delay.

The program is protected but once you have typed in your name you may copy it to a hard drive or another floppy for

backup protection. It is better to install to a hard disc and run it from there although the program will run happily from a floppy-only system. Personal Accounts V3 is compatible with any RISC OS computer with no extra memory requirements, although with RISC OS 2 there will be no 3D style effects. Once loaded onto the icon bar, bringing up the *Info* window will give you your serial number for the program to enter on the registration card. You are able to keep as many sets of accounts as you like as there is no site licence required.

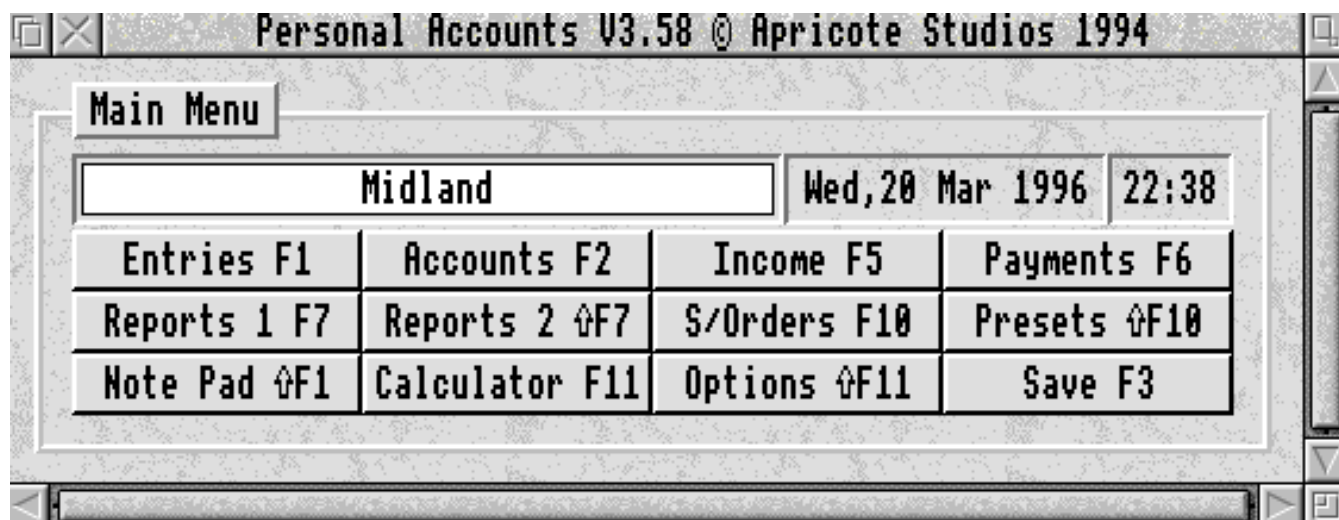
You can keep track of up to 24 accounts which is more than enough for anyone including a club or small business. As with most accounts programs, it is the setting up that takes most of the time but

Account Information			
Acc Name:	1:Bank Account		
Acc Number:	1234-4567-89012	Sort Cd:	10-10-10
Address:	123 High Street		
	Anywhere		
	Miles from Anywhere		
	Anywhereshire		
Opening:	1003.00	Credit Limit:	1500.00
Comments:	The Arm club expenses account!!!!		

*Account information could also include the telephone number of the bank along with the Manager's name!*

with Personal Accounts the task is made easier with some good keyboard shortcuts such as incrementing cheque numbers and copying the previous inserted date just by pressing return. Full undo/redo facilities and drag & drop are available. Alternatively you can call up

and where it goes. A total of 92 headings are allowed for each, which should be more than enough for anyone. Budgets can also be set up for each heading so you can see at a glance if you have spent too much on food etc and how much pay and other income you have had to date.



*Accessing the various facilities is straightforward*

the *options* window to set the Ignore Drag & Drop operations completely or turn on/off both internal and external drags along with turning off the confirmation window regarding the drag. Other options include auto save, formats of zero, changing character to be used on reconciliation, incrementing cheque numbers, automate standing orders each period, paper size (for printing) and password protection.

## Opening an Account

You need to set up the payment and income headings which will help you to see where all that money comes from

The package includes a calculator which I like, it is fully integrated with the program and is not an add-on. Any calculation fields are saved with the account so can be recalled at a later date. Also there is a notepad so you can leave messages or reminders for the next time you open the program.

The entries window is wide so is better in a wider screen mode such as mode 39, mode 16 (if you don't have a multiscan monitor) or for those of us with a Risc PC then try 1024x768 resolution. The entries window is the heart of the program where all transactions are

Accounts				
Name	Statement	Current	I	Forecast
1 Bank Account	1003.00	1003.00		2503.00
Totals:	1003.00	1003.00		2503.00

placed whether they are transferral of money from one account to another, payments or monies received (income). Two of the columns, headed FROM and TO let you deal with all accounts together. If you are entering a fair number of entries then there are some nice touches such as when entering the

to a DTP package such as the Impression family or exporting to a spreadsheet. The formats are to a text file (ASCII ) either spaced for importing into *!Edit* with correct formatting or tabbed for importing into a word processor or DTP package with correct formatting or a CSV file for importing into a spreadsheet

From	To	Ref	Total	Descr

date field, if the first part of the date is entered then press return and the rest is automatically filled in for the current month. Cheque number incrementing is available by just pressing return so long as it is the same cheque book as a previous entry and has been set in the options window.

If you have lots of entries to input which are not regular, such as obtaining cash from *Hole in the Wall* machines then Quick Entry Presets (macros) will help to cut down on the typing. Shift+F10 opens the presets window which is similar to the main entries window. Once they are set up, it just requires an upper case letter inserted in the date field and then just fill in the required missing data. Up to 20 presets can be used — great for those that only type using one finger.

The reports section of Personal Accounts V3 is very flexible in that the report can be as complicated or as simple as you require for either printing out, exporting

and a continuation file. The continuation file would be used when you have run out of memory and need to continue the account but under another name. The bottom two rows on the entries window relate to the extensive search facilities of the program. The search can be simple or complicated depending on your needs. The standing orders are simple to set up and can be set to be automatic or manual by clicking on the relevant icon in the options set up window. Personal Accounts can also import CSV files by just dragging to any window. Only entry type files can be dragged in and the fields must be set to the same and in the same order as is usual with any program that imports CSV files.

Printing covers all aspects such as direct to printer (for RISC OS 2 users or those with a slow dot matrix printer), with condensed mode on or off. Using RISC OS printer drivers you can set up the usual such as font type, font size and

whether you want to print landscape or portrait ie sideways or upright, printing of the full account or just a section such as *Standing Orders*. Unreconciled entries, Reconciled entries, budgets or just a simple breakdown can all be set up using one of the Reports windows. Report 1 is for you to set up whilst Report 2 has four options which are Accounts, Payment and Income headings and Standing Orders.

As you may gather this program has impressed me with its ease of use and short learning curve. The manual is comprehensive and easy to read. It is set out in an tutorial manner with full indexing, list of keyboard short cuts and some useful hints and tips.

I have been using the program for about 3 weeks now and it has become automatic for me to add in any payments as soon as I sit down at the computer. A little and often makes life much easier! The only problem I have had so far was when it came to printing. Time to put RTFM to the test. It worked! A few minutes to read the manual when a problem occurs can work wonders and also save on the phone bill.

Payment Analysis Headings: Page 1			
Budget	Payment Headings	Total	Budget-Tot
	A1		
	B1		
	C1 Car		
	D1		
	E1		
	F1		
	G1		
	H1		
	I1		
	J1		
	K1		
	L1		
	M1 Mortgage		
	N1		
	O1		
	P1 Provisions		
	Q1		
	R1		
	S1		
	T1		
	U1		
	V1		
	W1		
	Sub Totals		
	All Totals		

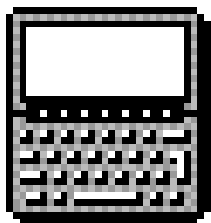
*The information can be displayed in several formats*

This program is a dream to use and will be used by me for all my accounting needs in future.

The help given by Apricote is exceptional and Quentin is always open to suggestions for making the program better and he is very quick at fixing any reported bugs.

*Ralph Sillett*

Single user price: £49 inc VAT.  
Available from Apricote Studios  
2 Purls Bridge Farm, Manea, Cambs,  
PE15 0ND. Tel & Fax 01354 680432



# Pocket Book Corner

Toby Smith takes his usual look at the contents of his pockets!

Welcome to yet another edition of the original column for the smallest but best computer!

## Passwords

I have recently been introduced to a wonderful little freeware utility to add the missing password facility to the PocketBook series. Many readers will be aware that the Psion 3 and 3a on which the Pocket Books are based have an (optional) password screen after power on that protects your information from prying eyes. This screen also displays the owner information, hopefully promoting return of the machine if lost / stolen.

This feature was removed from the Pocket Book series as it would, predictably, cause havoc in a school environment. However, those of us using our Pocket Books on a personal scale can now use the *AcoPass* utility to regain this protection. The system accurately emulates the Psion Password function,

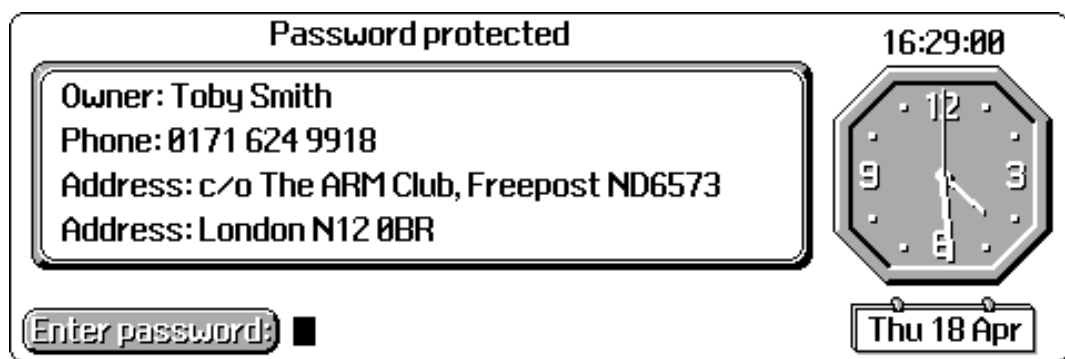
and hence is nigh impossible to crack, and also works with utilities like PassOn, which switches the password facility on and off so that it only comes on once each day (rather than each power-on, which can get annoying)

Should any readers want a copy of AcoPass (and PassOn) they should be available from all good Psion PD sources. If you can't find it elsewhere, send me an email to [pbk@armclub.org.uk](mailto:pbk@armclub.org.uk) and I'll send you an archive. (and if you send a disc and SAE I'll even do it by post...)

## Pocket Book PD Library

It seems that our re-organisation of the Pocket Book section of the PD library has caused some confusion, particularly with those used to the old system. Most of these changes have, trust me, been carefully thought out to make the applications as easy to install and accessible to as many people as possible.

Most of the problems stem from the fact that the internal storage of the Pocket Book & Psion use a DOS system — file names can



*The password screen appears when the machine is switched on*

be 8 characters long, with a three letter extension to indicate filetype. Acorn file names can be 10 chars long, with filetype indicated by icons, and stored by a different system. Unfortunately, storing DOS filenames on an Acorn format disc causes name corruption, as 8+3+1 for the separator =12 chars, which is bigger than 10.

Another problem is that most Psion PD is distributed in compressed ‘ZIP’ archives to conserve space, rather like most Acorn PD is distributed in ArcFS Archives. Unfortunately, whilst you can safely presume that all PC owners have a copy of the freeware ZIP reader / writer PKZIP, you can’t make the same assumption with Acorn owners. Ignoring using PKZIP on a PC Card or PC Emulator, the only ZIP reader is SparkFS from David Pilling, which is commercial software and hence can’t be presumed to be in everybody’s collection and can’t be distributed with the Pocket Book PD Discs. The freeware version of this, SparkPlug, could be distributed, but won’t preserve the extension of files copied out of a ZIP, even if they are copied to a filing system that can support them. (Hence each individual file would

have to be copied out and then renamed individually when on the Pocket Book).

(For the technical minded, DOS also allows certain characters in filenames that have special uses in ADFS like & % and \$. If these appear, validly, with a ZIPed filename, then SparkFS won’t be able to access them. If the same file is accessed through DOSFS on a DOS floppy or hard disc partition, or via PocketFS for a PocketBook drive, it will be displayed with these characters substituted, and hence can be copied about on the Acorn, while maintaining the special characters in the DOS filename versions.)

Hence all the Pocket Book software is distributed uncompressed on DOS floppies. Anyone with RISC OS 3 can read DOS floppies natively so copying will require no extra software, other than PocketFS obviously. (RISC OS 2 users can’t use newer PocketFS versions anyway).

Unfortunately this does mean a loss in space over then previous compressed versions, but at least anyone with a Pocket Book (or Psion) can transfer the

1996		Thu 18 Apr:																															
		M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T		
Jan	1								8							15							22					29	31				Jan
Feb					1				5							12	A						19				26		29				Feb
Mar						1			4							11							18			25	A				31		Mar
Apr	1								8							A	15						22				29	30					Apr
May			1						6							13							20				27			31			May
Jun							1		3							10							17				24				30		Jun
Jul	1								8							15							22				29	31					Jul
Aug					1				A	5						12							19				26				31		Aug
Sep								1	2							9							16				23					30	Sep
Oct		1							7							14							21				28		31				Oct
Nov						1			4							11							18				25				30		Nov
Dec								1	2							9							16				23				30	31	Dec

Schedule is supplied with the Pocket Book II and is a very capable package



files from their Acorn, without needing any extra software.

During all this change over, almost all of the applications were tested, all their documentation converted to an Acorn readable format, and the file that make up the applications distributed into directories on the floppies so as to make installation a single drag and drop operation, rather than a jigsaw of putting this file here and that file there and so on. If I say that the changeover took about a fortnight of 7 day a week, nine-to-five work during what I laughably called my holidays, then you might get an idea of the work that has gone into this comprehensive selection. (Long letters of adoring thanks to the usual addresses please)

### **Pocket Books In Schools**

During the 1993-1994 Educational year, NCET (National Council for Educational Technology) conducted a national pilot study on the use of portable computers in schools, with £2½ million backing from the Department for Education. The trial involved the use of both traditional portable computers and Acorn Pocket Books. The Pocket Books are reported to have scored highly with both teachers and pupils. They were used mainly for word-processing and numerical work across the curriculum. Some subjects also used the machines to carry out surveys and data-logging tasks, where the ultra-portability and long battery life of the machines made them stand out from traditional portables. Many pupils also discovered the advanced features of the spreadsheet, generating formulae that

asked what-if questions of the data before being asked to. Much of the data was transferred up to Acorn desk-tops for final re-drafting and publication - one school even reported writing the entire school magazine on Pocket Books.

In these days of diminishing resources, many commented that a 'fleet of Pocket Books was a good choice for a school - after all you can get 5 for the price of one A7000 or portable computer. They are also easier to move about - they can be easily used in any classroom or laboratory, rather than requiring their own special room, and as all Pocket Book owners will know the battery life far outweighs that of 'big' portables - months versus hours!

### **Special Edition**

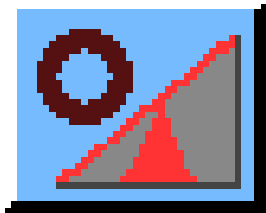
A special limited edition Psion has been released. The machine is a normal 2MB Psion 3A, but with a wood effect casing, rather than the usual mottled grey. Available from all Psion retailers for just under £500!

### **Finally**

Yet again my pages draw to a close and I can once again look Simon the Editor in the eyes without feeling sheepish. Keep the letters and questions rolling in, and I'll manage to reply to all of them (honest!)

*Toby Smith*

Go on! Get in touch with Toby or send him an Email. He's a lonely chap! He can be contacted via the Freepost address or Email: [toby@armclub.org.uk](mailto:toby@armclub.org.uk).



# Mechanisms

A major educational resource  
reviewed by Hilary Reed

**M**echanisms is the first CD-ROM in a series dealing with Technology from Creative Curriculum Software.

The dual format CD-ROM contains both Acorn and Windows versions and is aimed at the designing and making aspects of the core National Curriculum. I have found the material so well chosen and flexible that it is equally applicable to attainment targets in Science and in Design and Technology and could be used with pupils/students of all ages and abilities, from Junior School to GCSE

and GNVQ, and for those with special educational needs. It is well priced at £69 plus VAT for a single user or £99 plus VAT for a network or site licence.

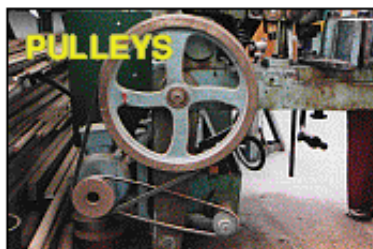
Mechanisms loads very easily with a single click on the CD-ROM drive icon on the icon bar, although it is disconcerting that the whole desktop vanishes for a while before the window displaying the contents of the CD-ROM appears on the screen. The Title Page and subsequent pages then load quickly and easily with the usual double-click of the mouse

MECHS: Commonest

## THE COMMONEST TYPES OF MECHANISMS



CAMS



PULLEYS



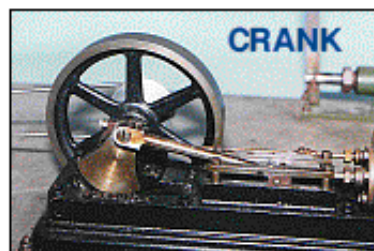
GEARS



LEVERS



INCLINED PLANE



CRANK

Double click on any  
photo....



CHAIN & SPROCKET



LINKAGES

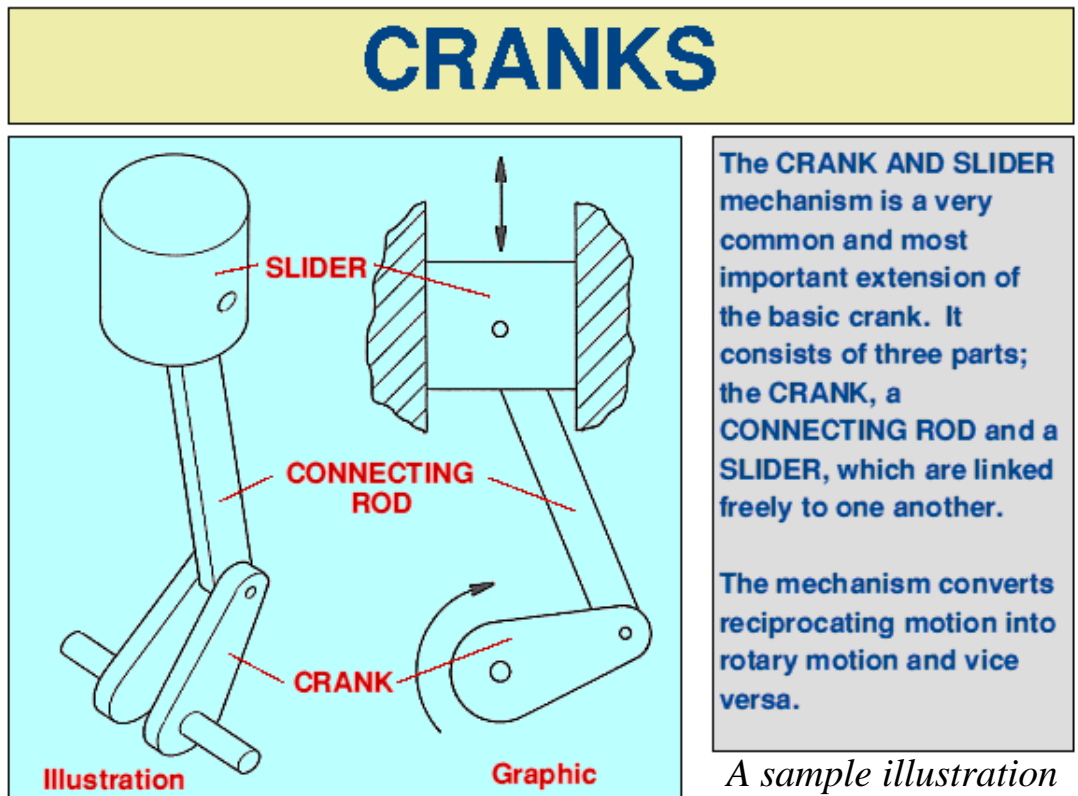
*High quality photographs are provided throughout the Mechanisms CD-ROM*

select button. Regular use of the right-hand or adjust button may, however, simplify movement between pages.

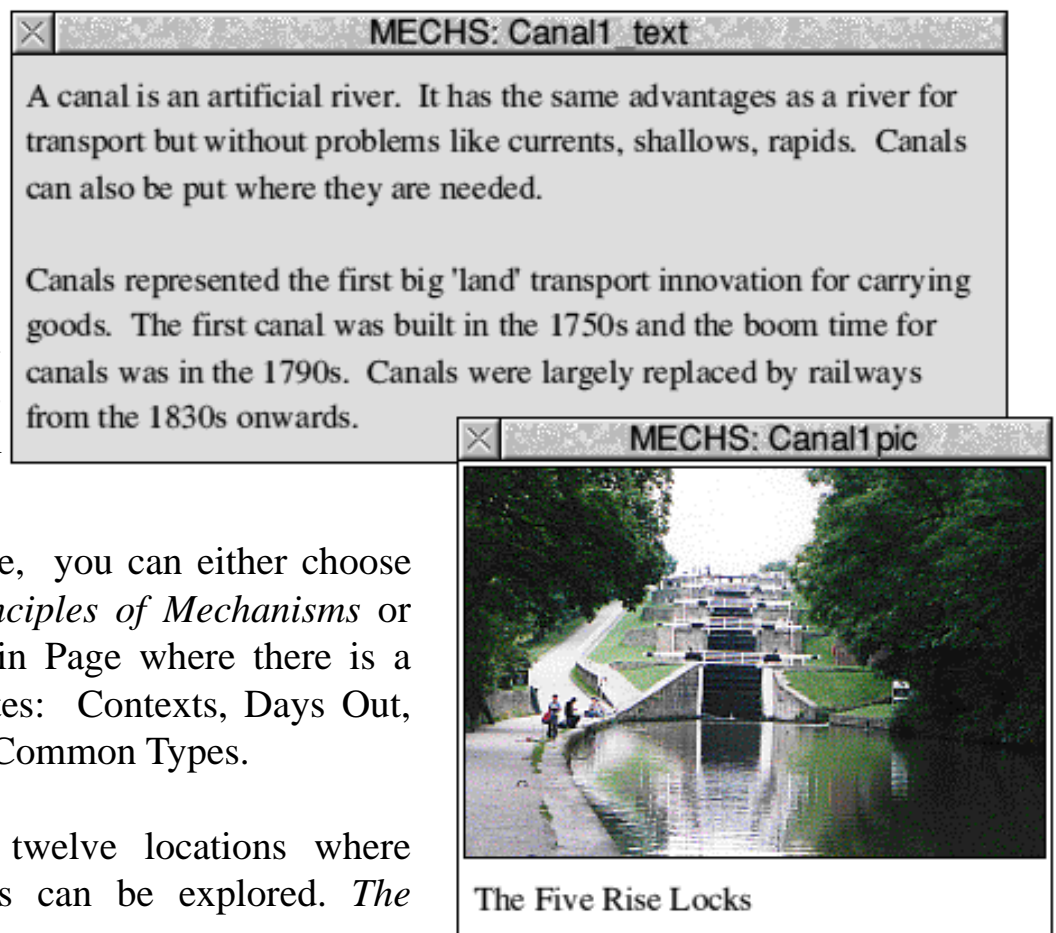
The Help section on the Title Page is worth reading first. It provides useful instructions for finding your way through the copious resources. These are accessed through hypertext links, page buttons and a range of self explanatory icons. The program has been designed using *Genesis* and while this may have imposed certain constraints on the authors, the result is user friendly. It is also easy to navigate a variety of pathways through the huge bank of resources and information available.

From the Title Page, you can either choose to explore the *Principles of Mechanisms* or proceed to the Main Page where there is a choice of four routes: Contexts, Days Out, Do It Yourself and Common Types.

Contexts presents twelve locations where simple mechanisms can be explored. *The*



*Garage*, for example offers nine objects which are displayed as high resolution photographs with accompanying overlays and text. The huge range of simple mechanisms available includes





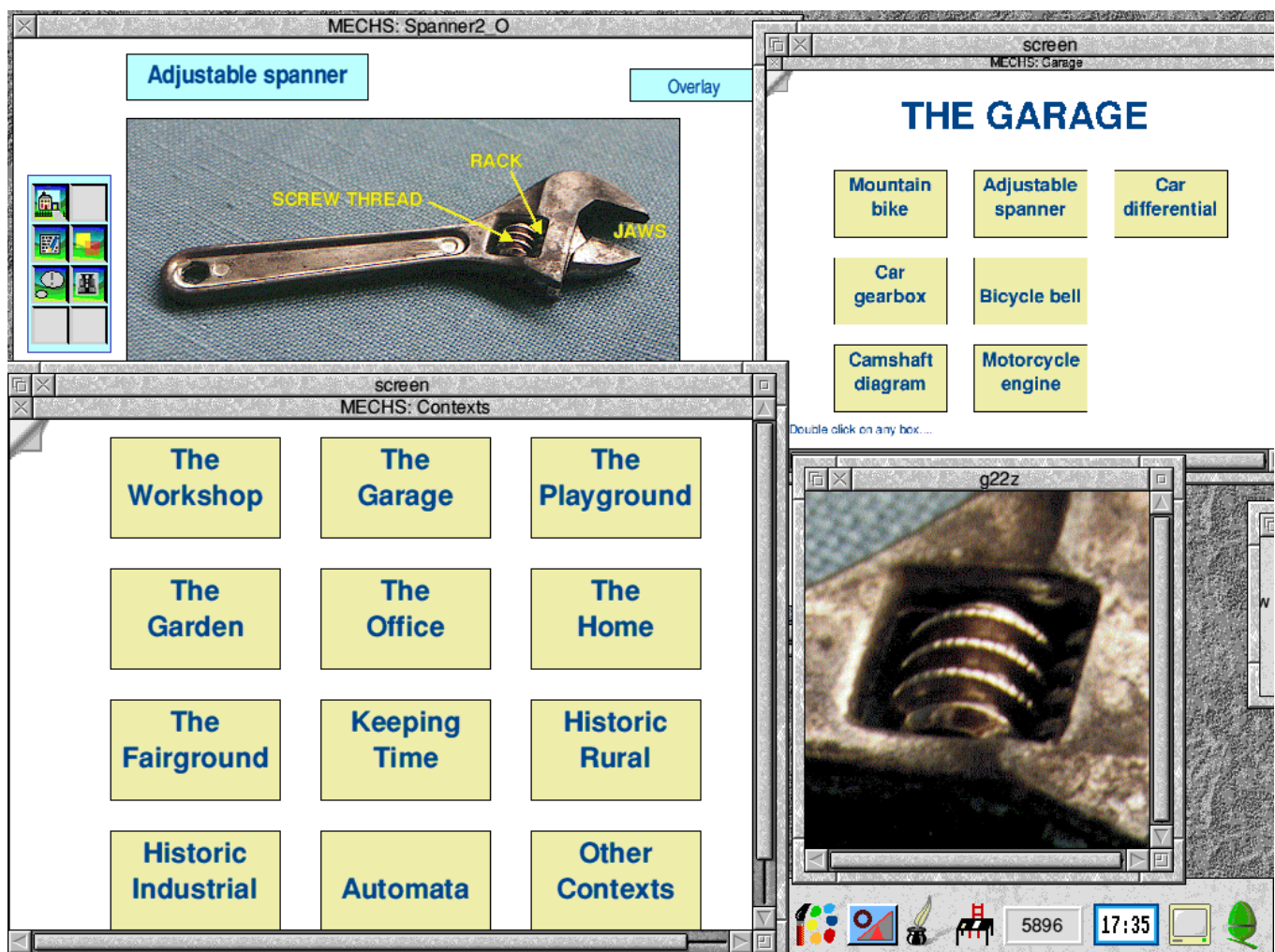
many that a child would know and a choice of simple or detailed explanations stimulates interest. The clear layout is enticing rather than intimidating and encourages you to explore further.

The *Days Out* section gives a choice of four larger investigations: Snowdon Mountain Railway, Harewood Traction Engine Rally, Crakehall Watermill, and the Leeds and Liverpool Canal. Video clips, carefully organised photographic sequences, animations and lucid explanations are as close to a real visit as you can get via your monitor screen. The text also includes information about railways, canals, mills and transport events throughout the country, so that investigation and research of local

examples can follow naturally from the interest generated by Mechanisms.

*Do It Yourself* provides information about educational construction kits suitable for different age groups for practical work, eg Lego Dacta, Inventa from Valiant Technology and Technology And Science Kits from TecQuipment Limited. While this is essentially an advertisement, it may be useful to teachers and schools developing their Science, Design and Technology resources or to parents searching for a really useful present for their offspring!

The last section, *Common Types*, is closely linked to the earlier-mentioned Principles. Principles gives the

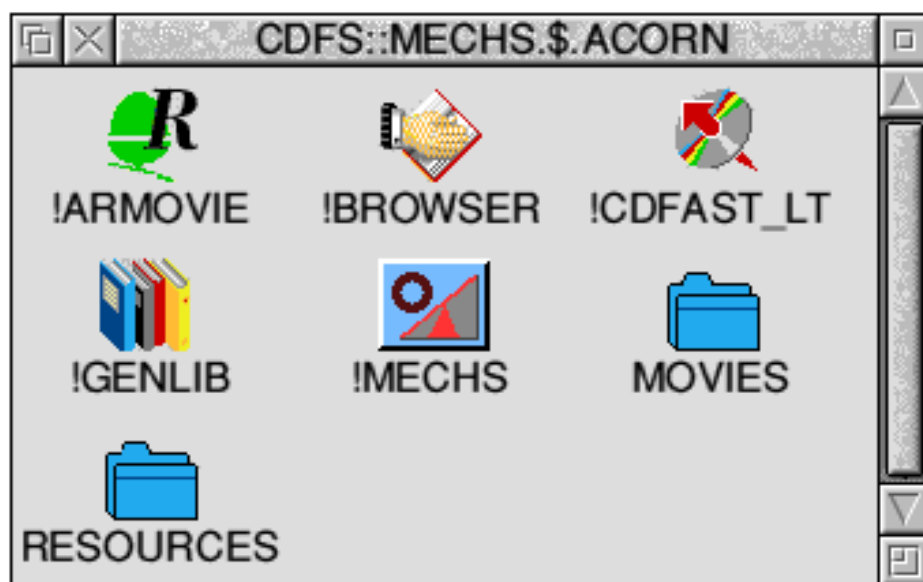


*The only snag with Mechanisms is that it makes you want a larger monitor!*

investigator a basic introduction to the forces present in machines and mechanisms; the size, the direction, the origin of those forces and the resulting motion or movements, together with a summary of what mechanisms do. The three fundamental mechanisms: the lever, the wheel and axle, and the inclined plane are explained in terms of input, process and output. From this point the program leads to the eight most common types of mechanisms, which use one or a combination of the three fundamental mechanical principles. Cams, pulleys, gears, levers, inclined plane, crank, chain and sprocket and other linkages are explained through a variety of examples, with high resolution photographs, overlays, animations and clear text, supported also by sound and video clips. The choice of everyday objects and simple machines, from the playground slide to the mountain bike and car differential will ensure that even if you didn't know or care before, after this you will understand and enjoy machines and mechanisms!

An educational resource pack is supplied with the CD-ROM, which includes suggestions for project work which most teachers will find useful. There is also an excellent resource bank of additional photographs, drawings, diagrams, text and CSV files on the CD-ROM which are mentioned on some of the worksheets

supplied and can easily be printed. Text and photographs from the program are also easy to print by pressing the middle or menu mouse button over the chosen object on the screen. You are given the option to print page or to save the selected sprite, drawfile etc. which you can print later.



*Mechanisms shows the value of CD-ROM as a medium*

The excellence of this program is clearly the result of careful development by Creative Curriculum Software, apparently taking over two years to complete. The wait has certainly been worthwhile and we can look forward to further comprehensive and stimulating titles in this series in the near future.

*Hilary Reed*

Hilary is Lecturer in Geography and also Science and Leisure and Tourism in a Tertiary College in Hampshire. Creative Curriculum Software can be contacted by phone on 01422 340524. Fax 01422 346388.



# Well I never!

Geoff Lane presents his latest regular page of hints and tips to make you kick yourself!

Well folks, Christmas has been and gone and it is time once again for another page within the incredibly exciting Eureka magazine [*ahem* — *Ed*] of “Well, I never knew it did that”.

This is the page of fascinating facts about your Acorn computer, hints, tips, useful functions, anything that may be of interest to us Acorn users.

John Manley sent in a hint (follows later) and mentions that he cannot claim it as his own, my own view is that hints or tips have no owners, they are picked up along the way by reading, talking and generally using the computer, it is often a function designed into the operating system so does it matter from where it was obtained? If you think it is of interest then you can bet your bottom dollar that someone will say “Well, I never knew it did that”, so, tap those keys and share your knowledge. Here are this issue’s contributions;

(1) Christopher Sawyer points out that pressing Shift-F12 will bring the icon bar to the front of any windows covering it, useful when needing to save something and the icon bar is covered, thanks Christopher, I had forgotten about that one, Shift-F12 will send it back again.

(2) Chris Seaward informs us that using

the Adjust (right) mouse button on the scroll bars moves the whole image within the window, it’s a bit like moving both scroll bars at the same time, cheers Chris.

(3) Bob Harding sends in three useful hints, you’re spoiling us Bob! (a) if you have two Edit windows open and you highlight text in one window, by placing the caret in the second window you can then move or copy the text to the second window using the menu functions or the keystroke equivalents, (b) if you hold the shift key down and then drag an object into an Edit window the pathname of the object is copied into the window. (c) have you ever taken a screenshot using Paint ? up comes the little save icon but you’ve forgotten to open a window to save it in and of course the window will disappear as soon as you click a mouse button to open a window, just drag the save icon onto the Paint icon on the icon bar, three good uns there Bob.

(4) John Manley writes that using the Adjust (right) mouse button on the scroll bar bumper arrows moves the window in the opposite direction, nice one John, very handy if the screen has a few windows open.

(5) My daughter Claudia reminds us that if you select ‘Show grid’ within the Draw menu option you can accurately position



pictures, text, etc., you will know exactly where they will come out on the printed page and remain correct even if you zoom in or out. I tend to set subdivisions to zero and set divisions to the size you want to measure in. Very useful that one Claudi.

An anecdote to finish with, having spent however long it took to type this article I showed my daughter Claudia a couple of the 'hints'. I showed her Christopher Sawyer's hint, Shift-F12, and she said 'Well, I never knew it did that', I then showed her that by pressing the same keys the icon bar would go back, trouble is, I pressed Shift-BREAK, and guess

what, I HADN'T SAVED MY WORK YET, AAARRGGHHH !!!!!, I said 'Oh, how silly of me', honest, and then proceeded to type it out again. Well, there's a few to wet the appetite, keep 'em coming folks, but remember, keep them simple and I'll try my best to print them all (twice maybe)!

*Geoff Lane*

*If you have any hints and tips for Geoff, please address them to Geoff Lane at the usual Freepost address. Hints can also be sent by email to the address: [hints@armclub.org.uk](mailto:hints@armclub.org.uk)*



## RapIDE 32

The new E-IDE interface from Yellowstone  
reviewed by Christopher Jarman

Yes folks! I am reviewing a product after I bought and paid for it myself! This was not a freebie, what is more the company had no idea that I was to review their product and their service. Actually neither did I, as Simon asked me to do this a week after I had taken delivery!

I bought the RapIDE 32 — well, because the *adverts* spoke highly of it I suppose. What I really needed was a Syquest in order to mail my CD-ROM applications to my publisher. We had agreed between us that we should both have the same equipment. But it needs an interface of some sort, and I opted for the RapIDE as much from curiosity as anything. Also, he was going to fit his

Syquest to his second IDE slot. If I had opted for a SCSI system, I understand that it would not have been compatible. Now these musings may give the impression that I know what I am talking about.... nothing of the sort. I am just as ignorant as most other strugglers in the minefield.

I ordered by phone and credit card and was assured each week, for a month, that it was on its way. Finally, about five weeks after my order, and several discussions on the phone with a very pleasant sounding chap at Yellowstone, it did arrive. One of the things that had sold me the equipment was that this nice fellow promised it would only take me, a

genuine techno-idiot, twenty minutes at the most, to get it installed, up and running. As it happened, it took me all of two days and several emails and phone-calls to and from more expert friends.

One of the great advantages to Yellowstone Educational Solutions is that they are not yet on email and so they were sheltered considerably from the flood of questions that would have otherwise come their way. As I was installing this thing over Easter they were not answering the telephone.

It plugged into the Risc PC alright, along with all my other cards, now stacked up like a little set of Benidorm hotel floors in my two slices. The RapIDE interface runs a filing system called ATAFS, don't ask me why. It sounds to me like some sort of women's combined operations force. The Installation and User Guide for it was unclear, as indeed it was about almost everything.

Now I have the thing installed, I should announce that it appears to be running well and doing all that I ask of it. It is the appalling manual and so-called *guide* that I could kick into the middle of next week. I and many others, have written constantly elsewhere about the serious problem we all have with manuals, within the Acorn market in particular. I dare say some technical wizard will look at this one ( eight sides of A5 ) and say "What's wrong with it?" Well matey if you have been sweating for most of your working life over a hot keyboard and Basic and C++ (whatever that is) there

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may be nothing in it that you didn't know already. But if like me and thousands of others your life has been full of other interests like art, literature, sex and beer then this little guide is no guide at all.

## Master and Slave

Metaphors are only of some use if you have some notion of what they represent. It seems that drives on an IDE port must be either a master or a slave. Fair enough, but which is which? And in any case what do master and slave actually mean in this context. The manual of course, merely introduced the terms and then had the cheek to say that it is *very important to get the master/slave arrangement correct*. Right..... but how do you do that? How do you know what you are supposed to be checking?

Next came the nightmare of *configuring*. Now I have done some configuring in my time and it's not easy. In fact at Lancing on the last ARMClub Open Day I had Andi Flower, Mark Smith and Steve Arnold for half an hour trying to work out the configuration of my Bootfile without success! Naturally us plonkers need special help in this department. The RapIDE manual has a diabolical two pages headed Configuring ATFS for which the word 'arcane' was especially coined. Even after scanning it and emailing a copy to Yorkshire while a friend studied it, we were no further forward. I eventually got the system going by sheer luck and trial and error.

So I now have a 270MB Syquest installed using the Yellowstone RapIDE interface. It works excellently. Without

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doing any specialist tests, I reckon it is at least as fast if not a shade faster than my standard IDE hard disc in a Risc PC 600. I would say, if you are good at this sort of thing, go for it. It works well and it's reliable so far. If you are a novice and expect any kind of help from the wretched manual —forget it.

And Yellowstone, here's a tip. Get someone to re-write the little leaflet/manual who has had nothing to do with the development, and who has been using a computer for only about a year and who knows what it is like to be nonplussed.

*Christopher Jarman*

Yellowstone Educational Solutions  
Bramingham Park Business Centre  
Enterprise Way  
Bramingham Park  
Luton LU3 4BU

Tel 01582 584828 Fax 01582 562255  
Price £119 plus VAT plus £5 p&p

*Have you any strong opinions about products you have bought for your Acorn machine? Maybe you have received excellent service — or very poor treatment for that matter. We welcome articles on any subject for possible inclusion in Eureka, please let me know if you would like to write something. Ed.*

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# The Eureka Disc

*The latest from Nick Evans on the PD Library & latest Eureka Disc*

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There has been quite a large influx of PD material into the Club over the past few months and you will see that the catalogue has grown by about 25% since the last issue of Eureka [wow! Ed].

Due to some complaints from members about the revamped Pocket Book section I have decided to revert to the old format, which surprisingly failed to generate any complaints at all, even though I am sure that it is not ideal.

Don't forget that we have, in the past, been able to offer an upgrade service for

those of you who have found that the version number of your favourite PD program has been superseded. This has now been extended to those discs which have significantly altered since you bought them. If the original PD disc is returned, along with stamps to the value of 50 pence for each disc, then I will replace this disc with the latest version. Please don't send cash as I have found that a lot of this goes astray in our postal system. Stamps will do or alternatively cheques and postal orders can be made out to 'The ARM Club'.

With this Eureka Disc I have included applications that have been requested over the past couple of months even though they have not necessarily been written by Club members. Many have been requested through the technical help service.

Some of the programs on the disc may not run from an archive. You should, wherever possible, de-archive the programs onto a floppy or hard disc before running them.

This month's magazine disc contains:

- The latest news about The ARM Club discounts scheme.
- There are a couple of programs by Geoff Lane to illustrate the series on modules written by Mark Smith.
- *Acopass* provides the Acorn Pocket Book with the power-on password protection that exists on the Psion machines but was removed by Acorn. In addition, it offers an extra feature not available to Psion users with the built-in password controls (the ability to clear the password).
- *CAViewer*, by Dean Sivell, is a general clip art display utility which can display Draw, ArtWork, Equasor, TableMate and Sprite format files. It is written in assembler and is therefore very compact, taking up just under 8K.
- *ChangeMod*, although a little old, changes sprite modes (this one is specially for Jack Doodles!).

The ARM Club Magazine page 55

- *DrWimp* is a utility that helps you to carry out some of the programming tasks that may have eluded you in the past.

- *GHZap* is a utility that will allow some games and demos to run under RISC OS 3 which wouldn't previously due to the use of a SYS "OS\_UpdateMEMC",64,64 call which was used in the early days to make the computer's memory chip, the MEMC, read the ROM faster.

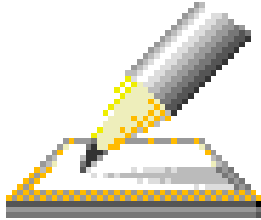
- *SampleCD* by Paul Wilkinson is designed to sample audio data from CDs and convert it into a variety of formats understood by your Acorn computer.

- *WindowRD* is a very small utility to grab windows off the desktop. Simply double-click on it, and when you press BOTH shifts at the same time, the window underneath the pointer is saved. This can include other windows on top of it, and also menus.

- *Xmas* calculates the number of days to the 25th December. An essential utility to help you plan your year using the calendar application that was on the Eureka 17 disc...

*Nick Evans, PD Librarian*

Please keep sending in your new PD software and items for the Eureka Disc. The PD Library can be contacted by email as [pdlibrary@armclub.org.uk](mailto:pdlibrary@armclub.org.uk). Should your copy of the Eureka Disc prove faulty, please return it to the Freepost address for replacement.



# Publish Art

Alan Wilburn looks at "The Ultimate DTP Resource" from Smart DTP

## Overview

Publish Art comes in a strong cardboard box with a comprehensive contents information sheet on the back. Inside are 8 DD discs, a 20 page manual and a registration card which offers discount prices on other SMART DTP resources.

The discs contain 625 files with 1500 single items totalling 13.1MB in ArcFS2 archives. The user is advised to make user discs or load them onto a hard disc and store the masters in a safe place. They are available in ArtWorks or Draw format and are a mix of grey scale and colour files.

Publish Art is a resource to be used in conjunction with DTP applications and is divided into 12 main categories each of which contains single and/or multiple files containing a number of similar items for ease of grouping and viewing.

The manual describes each category, giving examples and suggesting different uses. Another section suggests and shows ways of using and manipulating the files including sizing/scaling, rotating, different aspect ratios and shadows. The last section gives some advice on DTP.

## Testing

I use a laser printer and do not have access to a colour printer so I looked at

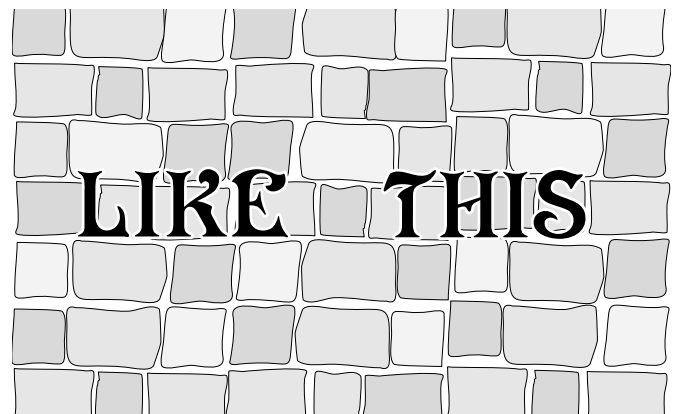
the package from this point of view and describe the results you get from a black & white printer. At the moment I think the majority of people use this type of printer so this should be applicable to most people's requirements. Any doubtful looking colour files were put through the printer to check clarity.

I found the easiest way for on-screen viewing was by using the PD application *!PicAPic* from Hugh Eagle which soon loaded (10 min.) everything and I could easily see the range of files offered.

"So what do you actually get for your money?" I hear you mutter and the only way to do justice to this product is to mention each category and give some examples.

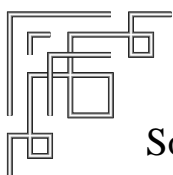
## The Resources

**Backdrops:** 89 files. A4 pages with a full range of themes such as stars, flames, bricks, textures and patterns suitable for covers or posters with text, to be emphasised, overlaid.

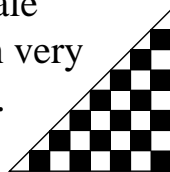


**Quick Paper:** 21 files. These are ready prepared A4 sheets waiting for your work. There is a set of 7, which are in landscape, to fold into 2 or 3 columns for pamphlets and the rest are full sheet portrait A4. The majority of these did not give good results at 600 dpi as the printer could not catch the colour blends in greys. To use these files would involve some time spent tweaking the colours. The idea is good and there are some good certificates and titles such as Info, News Paper, Please, Note, Remember, Presenting, Warning, Wanted and Stop give you some idea as to the type of sheets.

**Corners:** 6 files 120 items as single corners.

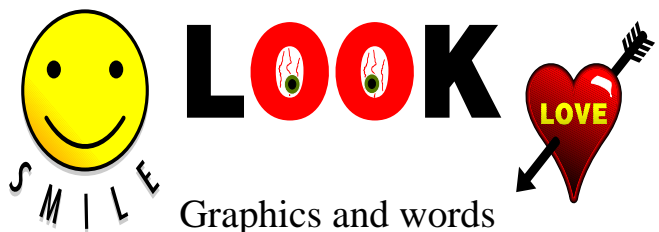


Some giving very good results, with others needing to be altered to get the greyscales balanced. Some unsuitable for greyscale being very dependant on very good colour blends.



**Drop Capitals:** 26 files 624 items. Each file contains 24 different versions of the same upper case letter so there are 24 alphabets. As the type of font is a matter of personal preference it is difficult to be objective — I only liked about half, the rest being too finicky and, in a few cases, difficult to recognize.

**Designs:** 42 files as shown opposite.



Graphics and words together to add to layouts and increase the visual impact with a minimum of effort.



**DON'T FORGET!**



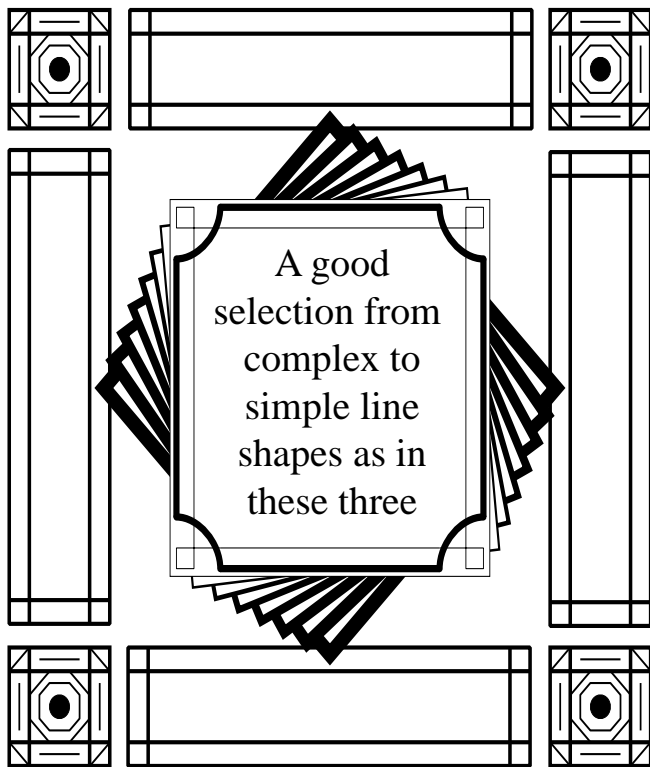
**Highlights:** 14 files 420+ items. This is the name for arrows, flashes, scrolls, signs and speech/think bubbles, all are of a high standard with a wide range to choose from.

**Page Layout:** 10 files 200+ items. These are to make your own Designer Paper — the type you can buy from suppliers with multi coloured margins and/or headers and footers. There are a fair number to please the majority of people with a colour printer, not effective enough for me with a b&w printer though. There is a large selection of rules which were excellent and title frames which I found to be very good on the whole.

**Borders:** 173 Files as shown overleaf.

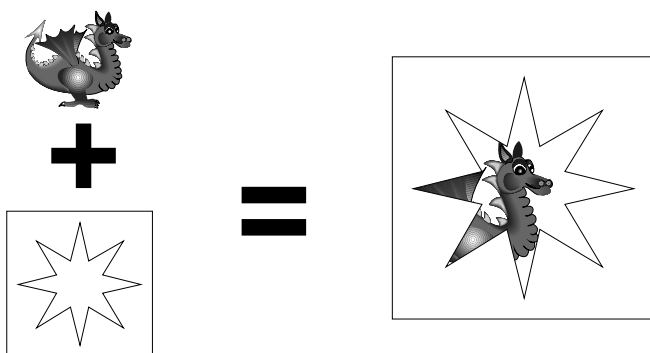
**Impression:** 228 files 24 irregular frames. These provide a very wide range of frames to be used from the Border Picker in the Frame Dialogue Box. The irregular frame templates are supplied in an Impression file and include flashes, starbursts, regular shapes, crosses and a tick.



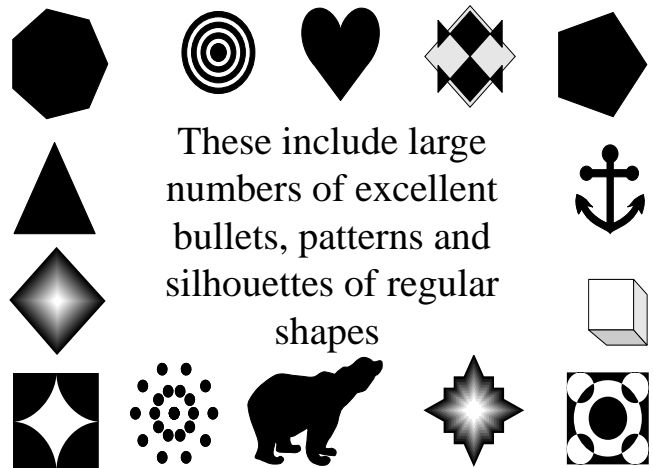


**Patterns:** 6 files 144 items. These are 2 cm square coloured patterns to be used as a resource to mix n' match and make your own margins, headers, footers and backdrops. Using the ones which give good b&w printouts they are useful to customize your own paper.

**Stencils:** 3 files 36 items which are a set of rectangles with shapes, "cut out of them", so they can be overlaid on sprites or vector artwork so parts are visible through them.



**Symbols:** 6 files, 400+ items as shown opposite.



These include large numbers of excellent bullets, patterns and silhouettes of regular shapes



## Copyright

The files are all royalty free which means they can be used by any purchaser for their own use and may be reproduced in any printed document free of charge using as many files as you wish. You are allowed to send files to the printers as long as you retain control of them as they are not deemed the "third party" you are not allowed to pass files to. The files may not be used in electronic form in any other commercial or public domain product so can not be used in multimedia if the files can be retrieved by users.

## Conclusions

The version I reviewed was in ArtWorks format but any files with blends I thought questionable in Draw were exported and checked, very few demonstrated bad banding.

If you use an application such as !Chameleon this makes life a lot easier to modify Draw files for printing – I often use this to great effect. I found the majority of work in this package to be of high quality and suitable for black & white printing.

Some frames were identical, apart from the main colour, so were not suitable but this is really just nit picking when you consider the size of the resource. A few seconds work in Art Works can make files suitable, for example this 'A' was easily customised. Some   $\rightarrow$   work would be required to adjust colours to get the best results from the package.

I have no hesitation in recommending this resource to anybody, you will definitely have a good start to a DTP clipart library.

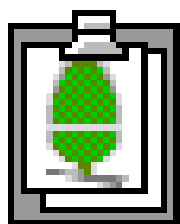
*W. Fillburn*



Smart DTP	Publish Art
36 Park Road	costs
Duffield	£35
BELPER	inclusive
DERBYSHIRE	of
DE56 4GR	Post/
01332 842803	Packing



*Members can purchase the package for £30 during the next month only, quoting their Membership Number and this article.*



## Acorn PC Exchange

Peter Jennings discovers the missing link  
between RISC OS and Windows

**T**he most frequent comment I have heard about *Acorn PC Exchange* is that it should have been provided free with every Risc PC instead of having to be bought as extra software costing £30.

Briefly, it allows the exchange of text, pictures and sound files between RISC OS and Windows 3.1 or 3.11 by linking both operating systems through the PC Clipboard. I do not have Windows 95, and Acorn tell me that they do not support it at present, but I understand that it does generally work with that as well.

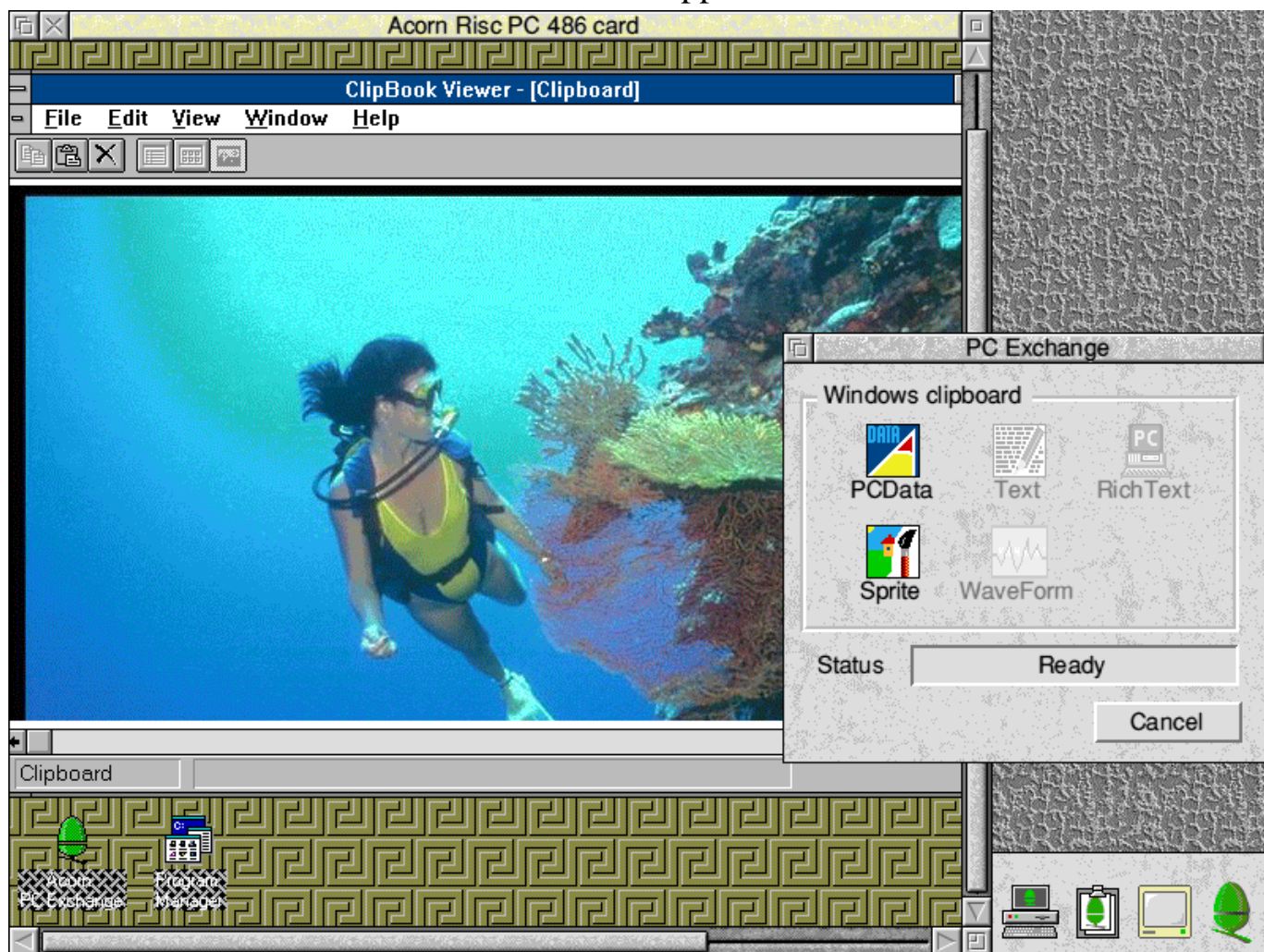
The software comes on two discs, one RISC OS and the other Windows, with a slim User Guide. Disc 1, the Acorn half, contains the !PCEX application which is  
The ARM Club Magazine page 59

copied onto the hard disc, ideally into the Apps directory, and some Choices and Resources files to be copied into !Boot. This is all very simple to do.

My first problem came when installing the Windows part of the software from disc 2. This was not a fault in the software but came from my fairly limited experience with PCs, which is restricted to using my Acorn PC card to look at CD-ROMs as I have not yet found much else worth running on it. The installation has the usual lengthy succession of windows, all requiring a click on "OK" or "Continue" and one of these informed me that the virtual memory option was to be used. I duly clicked OK and was then curtly informed that the installation had

failed and I should “correct the problem or contact your support representative.” After a couple more attempts had failed at this point I reran the original Windows setup, discovered there was no virtual memory and added some, which solved the problem. Windows now acquired a familiar looking Acorn icon and the new link between the two operating systems had been forged.

RichText, Sprite and WaveForm, which become highlighted in use to indicate the type of file which has been transferred. Dragging a RISC OS file onto this window converts it to its PC equivalent and places it on the Windows clipboard. PC files pasted or copied to the clipboard are converted and put on the PC Exchange window from where they can be dragged into directories or suitable applications as Acorn files.



*A sprite file, which has been dragged to the PC Exchange window, appearing on the Windows clipboard as a bitmap file*

The actual connection is made by running the applications in both environments. Icons appear on the Windows backdrop and the RISC OS icon bar and clicking on the latter opens a PC Exchange window containing greyed-out icons for PCData, Text,

As both the Windows clipboard and the PC Exchange window can be on screen at the same time the operation can be watched as it takes place. In fact, although it is not clear from the User Guide, it is not necessary even to run the clipboard. If a PC file is loaded into a

Windows application it just needs a click on 'Copy' in the Edit window to complete the transfer. Bitmap files can be converted to sprites, text data into its RISC OS form and RichText and Windows WAV data given Acorn file types in this way. There was no problem using the Windows Sound Recorder to load files for converting to Acorn WaveForm even though I do not have a PC sound card fitted.

Transferring RISC OS files to Windows seemed easy enough. Dragging the file into the PC Exchange window produced messages in a status panel saying it was being converted and transferred and, in a few seconds, the results could be seen in the clipboard window. However, my real problem began when I wanted to load sprites which had been converted to bitmap format into the Windows Paintbrush application as this would not recognise them as bitmap files.

I telephoned Acorn and was put through to Customer Care, who told me they had nobody who could advise on PC Exchange. They suggested I sent my query as a fax, which I did, stressing that I needed an urgent reply as this review had to be completed within a week. After three days I received a postcard acknowledgment but, after waiting a further week without hearing anything more, the review had to be sent off with no answer to the problem.

The User Guide seems to have been written on the assumption that anyone wanting PC Exchange would be a competent PC user, despite the fact that many Acorn users may have had little or no experience of DOS and Windows until adding a PC card to their machine. This is made worse by the pitiful lack of support from Acorn's Customer Care service.

*Peter Jennings*

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## Wakefield Acorn Spring Show

The Wakefield Acorn Computer Group is hosting its first major show on Sunday 19th May at the Cedar Court Hotel, just off junction 39 of the M1 motorway in Wakefield.

The WACG saw the gap in the Acorn calendar since there is no Harrogate Show this year and decided to host this event which is being attended by a number of dealers & other companies.

The Show lasts from 10.00am until 5.00pm and admission costs £2.50 for The ARM Club Magazine page 61

adults, £1.50 for children. Advance tickets cost 50p less and can be obtained by sending cheques payable to WACG Show to the following address:

WACG Show  
95 Cumbrian Way  
Lupset Park  
Wakefield  
West Yorks WF2 8JT

If Wakefield is too far for you to travel, many of the same exhibitors will be present at our Cambridge Open Day.

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# Talking Animated Alphabet

Adjowa Sowa gets back to basics in style...

As a primary school teacher, I am often frustrated when I am confronted with a non-English speaking child. This frustration reaches the pinnacle of despair when I am informed that this child has the added drawback of never having attended formal school.

These feelings of despair and frustration are due to the fact that such a child will need a great deal of one-to-one teaching, which I know I will not be able to adequately provide, and a barrage of stimulating activities which will need to be closely supervised. Animated Alphabet is a Godsend in that it allows

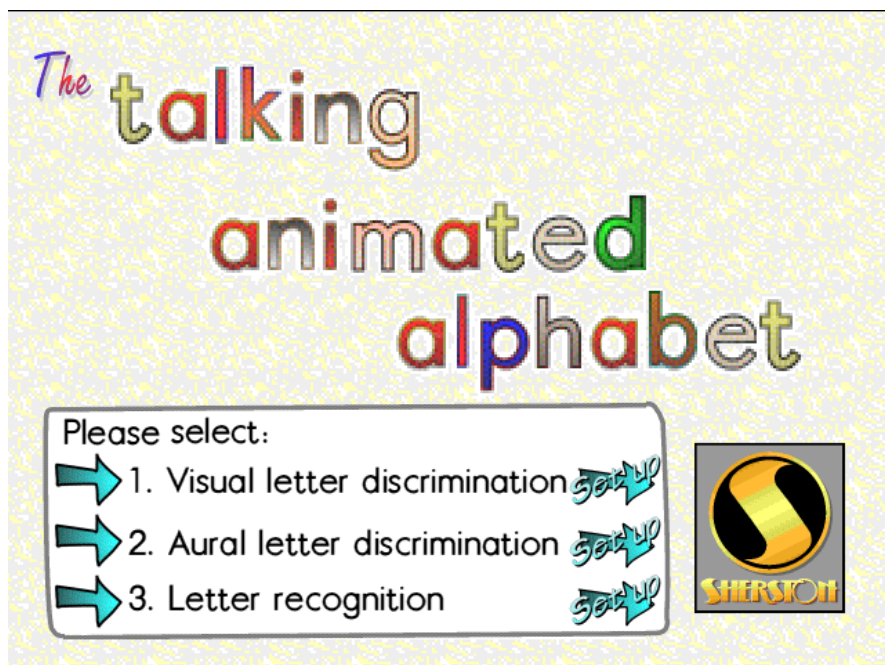
the program, is undergoing constructive, relevant and stimulating learning.

The Talking Animated Alphabet package comes on four discs: namely a start up disc and three activity discs. Each activity disc deals with one specific area. Disc one looks at letter shapes and visual discrimination (being able to tell one letter from another). This is a good starting point as children should be able to recognise the letters before they can associate them with a specific sound. Disc two looks at letter sounds and aural letter discrimination. It enables children to learn sounds of the letters and to learn

to distinguish between the sounds. Finally disc three combines the letter shape with the phonetic letter sound. It also presents letters that are commonly confused together to heighten children's knowledge and awareness of the alphabet.

The impact of the program is that each letter of the alphabet has a corresponding graphic drawn to fit the

letter shape: A has an apple, z has a zip, p has a parrot, etc.. Each letter is cleverly transformed, or 'morphed', into the associated graphic (or vice versa). The



me to monitor a child's learning while being able to give my attention to other children when necessary while safe in the knowledge that the child, while using

program also 'speaks' the sound of the letter and the name of the graphic.



I have been suitably impressed by this program but I feel I must stress that it should be used in conjunction with other activities off the computer to support their learning and not to take the place of the teacher or parent. However, it is possible to allow the children to work independently. The graphics on this program were detailed and appealing and I leapt for joy as I heard the soft yet clear speech. The only drawback was that I



Each disc has three levels of progression, easy, medium and hard and these are easily set by pressing control T. The program comes complete with alphabet cards which the children in my class found appealing and which I was able to use for some simple pre-computer activities. As both a teacher and a parent my heart warmed as my eyes came to rest on the record sheets also included the package. It seems Sherston had thought of everything. Here, I was presented with a record sheet for each activity which was well presented and simple to follow.

felt the graphics took a little too long to 'morph' in between each letter. However this is a small price to pay for such a well organised package.

Difficulty	Tries	Activity
<input type="checkbox"/> Easy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 6	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Whole activity
<input type="checkbox"/> Medium	<input type="checkbox"/> 13	<input type="checkbox"/> Morphing and animation only
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Hard	<input type="checkbox"/> 26	
	<input type="checkbox"/> U	

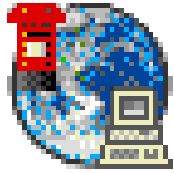
Letters

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Default sets	<input type="checkbox"/> A....Z
<input type="checkbox"/> User set...	
a b c d e f g h i j k l m n o p q r s t u v w x y z	

*Adjoa Sowa*

Cost £29.95 from:  
 Sherston Software, Angel  
 House, Sherston,  
 Malmesbury, Wiltshire  
 SN16 0LH. Tel 01666  
 840433. Fax 01666  
 840048. Email sales@  
 sherston.co.uk.





# Creating HTML pages

Club Webmaster Andi Flower introduces the techniques behind creating your own World Wide Web pages

I am sure that most of you have heard of the World Wide Web. It is, of course, a part of the Internet. That huge sprawling mess of computer systems that somehow manage to combine to form a coherent collection of data.

The World Wide Web (WWW), however, has got to be the most widely used graphical interface to the data stored on the Internet and probably the most easy to get to grips with. The software that is used to view all of the information in the WWW is generally referred to as a browser simply because it allows you to browse through the data at your own pace going where you want, when you want to.

Each of the "pages" on the WWW has a unique identifier to specify where it can be found on the Internet. This is called a URL or Uniform Resource Locator and it is what is used to "Open" a WWW site.

All of the information that you see when you access a WWW page is defined in an HyperText Markup Language (HTML) which is a special sort of programming language used specifically for the creation of WWW pages.

Recently there have been two major revolutions in the development of the World Wide Web. SUN Microsystems HotJava browser being one and the new language of VRML being the other. Both

of which are quite significant advances on HTML. However, I won't be going into detail about these at the moment because the purpose of these articles is to teach you how to create your own WWW pages.

The World Wide Web pages that I am working on for the Club can be found at the URL :

<http://www.brunel.ac.uk/~cs92adf/ArmClub.html>

and these are the pages that I will be using as an example during this series of articles. However, to start with you will need to know the basics before moving on to the more complex areas of HTML authoring.

In the HTML programming language there is a basic shell for any document which, in its simplest form, tells the browser that what it is reading is actually an HTML document and sets out the parts that the browser needs to deal with.

This is the simplest form of HTML document:

```
<head>
<title>
Document Title
</title>
```

</head>

<body>

Main text for the document.

</body>

It could be written as:

```
<head><title>Document Title</title></head><body>Main text for the document.</body>
```

However, to make it easy to read but also to save space I tend to use this format:

<head>

<title>Document Title</title>

</head>

<body>

Main text for the document.

</body>

You will notice that the commands that form the structure of an HTML document are encased in angular brackets <> and whilst the opening command simply contains the command itself, the closing (or end) command is preceded with a /. The text between the two labels <title> and </title> is, you

guessed it, the title of the document. This text is not actually displayed in the document itself but is used by the browser as a document title (in the case of ArcWeb this is set as the title of the RISC OS window).

The main text of the document is placed between the two <body> commands and can be virtually anything that you wish.

However, one thing that you will need to take into account is the fact that HTML does not insert line feeds or carriage returns without being forced to. In order to do this you need to use the command <p> (note there is no </p> command required as there is no use for it).

Example:

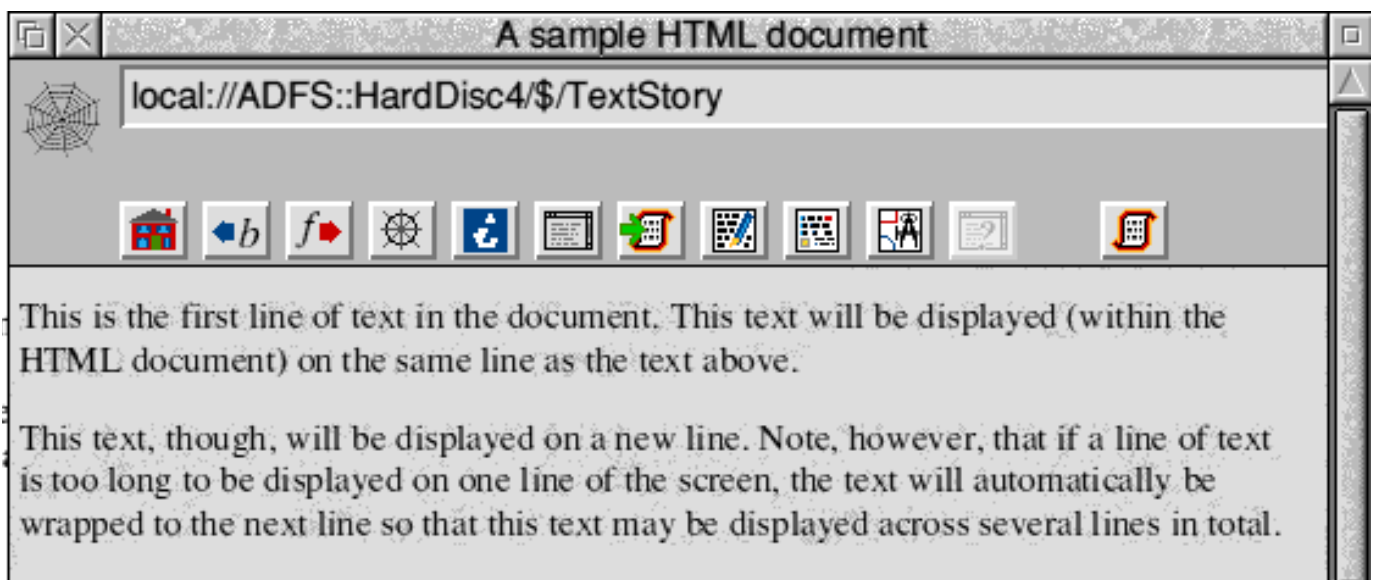
<head>

<title>A sample HTML document</title>

</head>

<body>

This is the first line of text in the document. This text will be displayed (within the HTML document) on the





*Part of The ARM Club's home page on the World Wide Web, written in HTML*

same line as the text above.

<p>

This text, though, will be displayed on a new line. Note, however, that if a line of text is too long to be displayed on one line of the screen, the text will automatically be wrapped to the next line so that this text may be displayed across several lines in total.

</body>

I hope that this whets your appetite for more HTML and next time i' llbegin to go through more of the commands that can be used to link to other pages and make the document look a little more professional.

*Andi Flower*

*Andi will be back next issue with another article on HTML. If you have developed your own web pages, please email the URL to us.*

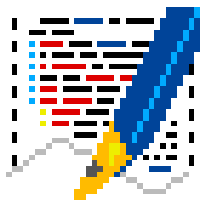
## Win a copy of HTML Edit from R-Comp

We have a copy of *HTML Edit* (as reviewed on page 65) to give away.

Everybody (apart from Committee Members) who sends in the correct answers to the following questions will be entered into a draw to win the copy of HTML Edit, worth £35.

1. What does WWW stand for?
2. What does HTML stand for?
3. What does VRML stand for?
4. Name an Acorn WWW browser.
5. Name a non-Acorn WWW browser.

Entries should be sent to:  
HTML Competition, FREEPOST  
ND6573, London N12 0BR.  
The prize winner will be drawn at random at our Cambridge Open Day.



# HTML Edit

Andi Flower tries out this package from R-Comp

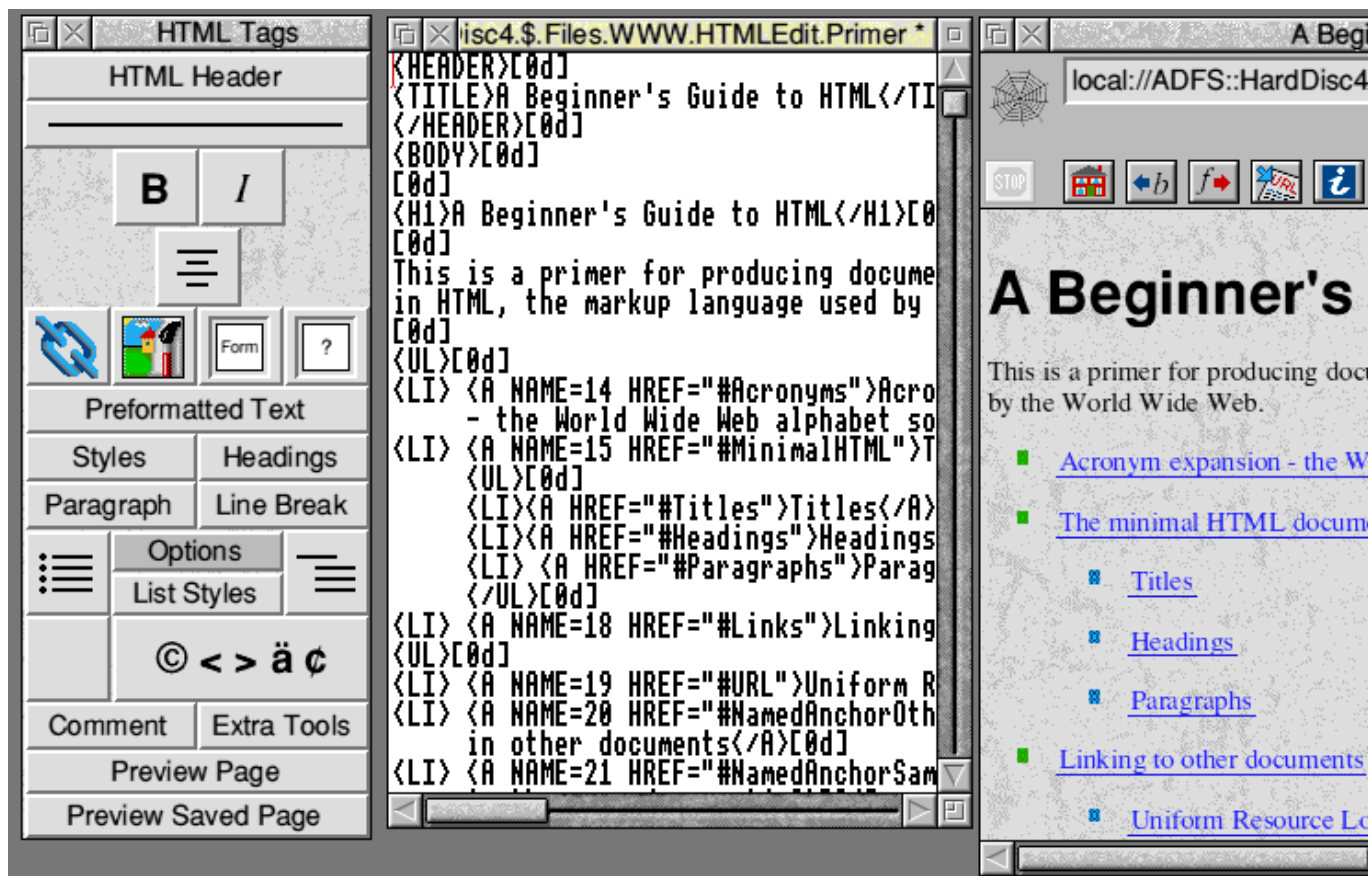
You've got your modem and paid your service provider for your internet link. Then you connected to the internet and ran your World Wide Web (WWW) browser and got lost for hours in the wonderful world of information that is out there.

When you close the connection it leaves you feeling that you must do something (apart from preparing for the huge phone bill!). You have decided that you want to provide the world with an insight into your home and you're going to do it by creating your own set of WWW pages. You set to work, load *!Edit* and then ... er ... then you realise you know nothing

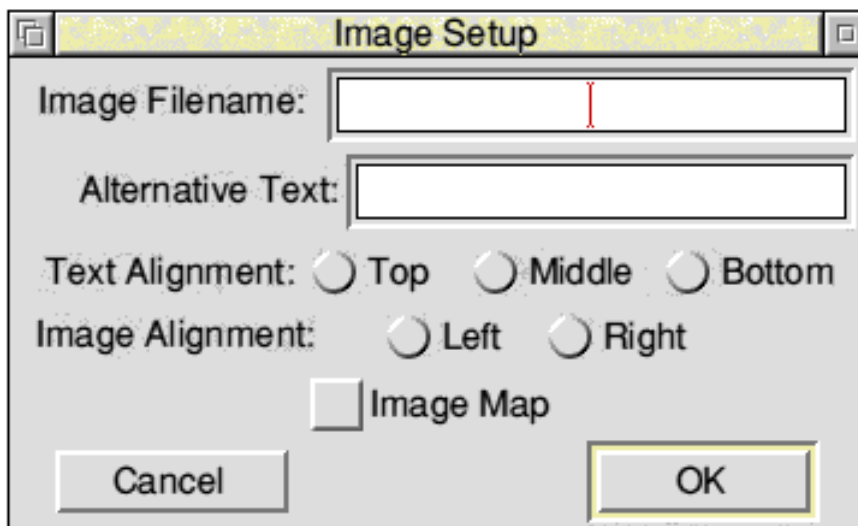
about how to write these things!

This is when you should turn to the new package from RComp, *HTMLEdit*. This program only has one purpose in life and that is to aid you in the development of WWW pages and depending on how much experience you have it could be just what you need.

HTMLEdit is very well presented and the documentation is exceptional. The manual gives a very easy to follow guide to the use of the package and provides an excellent starting point for learning HTML (Hypertext Markup Language) itself.



*HTML is not the world's most friendly language but HTMLEdit makes it easier*  
The ARM Club Magazine page 67



The software comes on a single double-density disc and can be installed on to a hard disc for easier access. Running the program and clicking select over the icon provides a control panel and an edit window. The edit window shows the current state of your document and is initially empty (unless you drag an already created HTML document to the HTMLEdit icon).

The control bar is the most important part of HTMLEdit as it provides all of the time and labour saving short cuts to the creation of different tags in your document. It provides buttons which will allow you to create all of the usual HTML extensions including:

- bold, italic and centred text
- horizontal rules
- line breaks
- paragraph breaks
- different text styles  
(ie. quotations, address' , strong etc)
- headings of any size
- preformatted text  
(including controlled width)
- lists of any type and list items
- comments

*HTML Edit is a useful tool for producing HTML scripts*



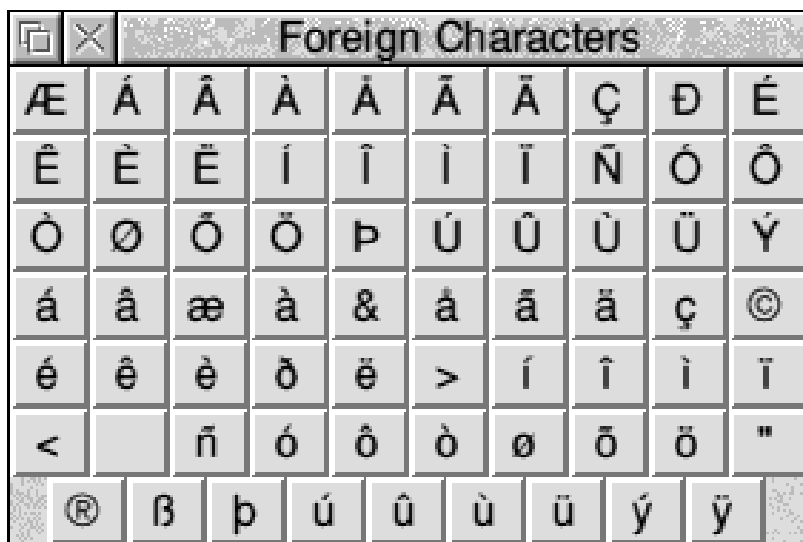
Other more complex options include those to create links (the mainstay of the WWW), insert images and provide forms and searchable indices.

Another button on the control bar allows the addition of foreign characters which are not normally easily represented in HTML (things such as the © and ® characters for example) but does not include those characters which I find are most often required such as the £ symbol.

The "HTML Header" button allows you to insert a collection of control tags into



any document which are provided as a default header and footer. The insertion can be done at any time and will add the header to the top of the page and the footer at the bottom. This tool could be exceptionally useful as the actual set of tags that are inserted are stored in text files within the HTMLEdit application directory and can be edited to contain whatever you require.



*A host of useful tools are provided in the package*

There is an "Extra tools" menu which provides options to allow easy transfer of HTML files to and from PC' sstrip all of the tags from the file that you are editing and also to save the file as text only (without actually removing all of the tags first).

Finally, there are two preview buttons allowing you to look at your masterpiece under construction. These simply provide a link to any WWW browser on you system and bring up the page that you are developing.

HTMLEdit is supplied with a collection of useful utilities that are relevant to the creation and viewing of WWW pages

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including WebGif, PrintWeb and Webster. Add this to the fact that the documentation is as well presented as it is and the power of the package in general, and you have a superb package that will provide an WWW page author with a tool that they wonder how they ever did without.

Elsewhere in this issue of Eureka, you will find a competition providing you with a chance to win a copy of HTMLEdit and also the first in a series of articles on creating your own WWW pages.

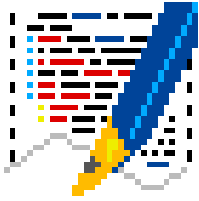
If you are a very experienced HTML author and know how to handle all of the functions which HTMLEdit can cope with then you may well not need the software but it will still provide you with a very good tool to reduce the time it takes to produce the pages that you want!

However, if you are only just beginning to write in HTML, HTMLEdit is just what you need and I suggest you purchase a copy before you even start working on your WWW pages.

*Andi Flower*

*webmaster@armclub.org.uk*

R-Comp is currently working on release two of HTML Edit which will include many new features. Upgrades will be available from release one for the difference in price.



# Typing Trainers

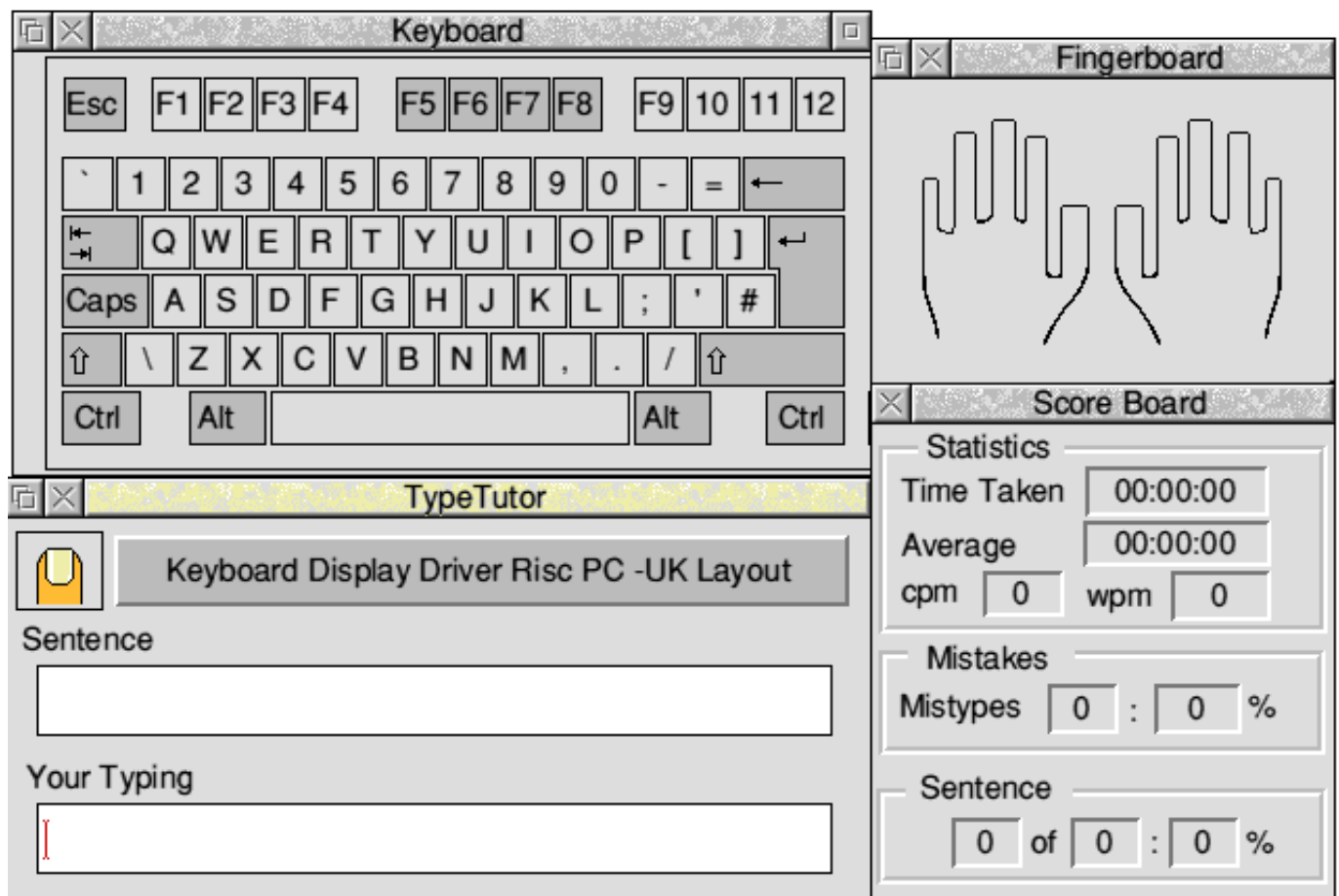
Geoff Stilwell gives his fingers some exercise

When there is not far short of a thousand pounds worth of computer in most classrooms, I find it ludicrous that most children are still wasting enormous amounts of time inefficiently pecking away at the keyboard with one finger.

Years ago I worked in a solicitor's office where I started to teach myself typing (using the book of the same name). Unfortunately, I didn't keep it up so, although I am quite an efficient typist now with a speed of about 25wpm, I don't have the confidence to avoid looking at the keys. I really feel envious when I see typists churning out text at

speeds of 60wpm and faster without appearing to be paying much attention to what they're doing at all. It's all down to practice, no doubt. Which is why I think we should start doing something about typing skills in schools in Britain, and the sooner we start the better.

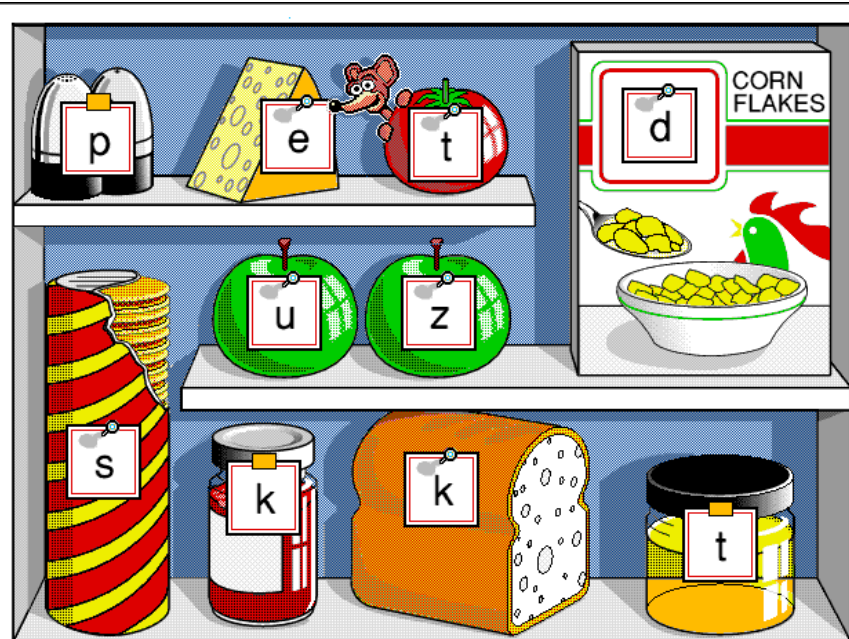
I was helping some year 2 children with some word processing recently. I suggested to the two girls that they split the keyboard in half and use one hand for each half. Even though I was expecting an improvement, I was surprised at the increase in speed and confidence of the two girls. Since then I have been



*The ARM Club's own TypeTutor program, written by Toby Smith*

recommending typing training programs to schools.

3.5" disc for use on the Archimedes computers. Considering how many BBC computers there are still in schools I would suggest that this might be a very beneficial way to use them.



The ARM Club's own TypeTutor, written by Toby Smith, has been bought by many schools who have phoned me on the ARM Club number to say how good it is so I have passed on the recommendations to the schools I have visited, although I would recommend it to mainly year 5 children and upwards. Cost: £10.00 from The ARM Club

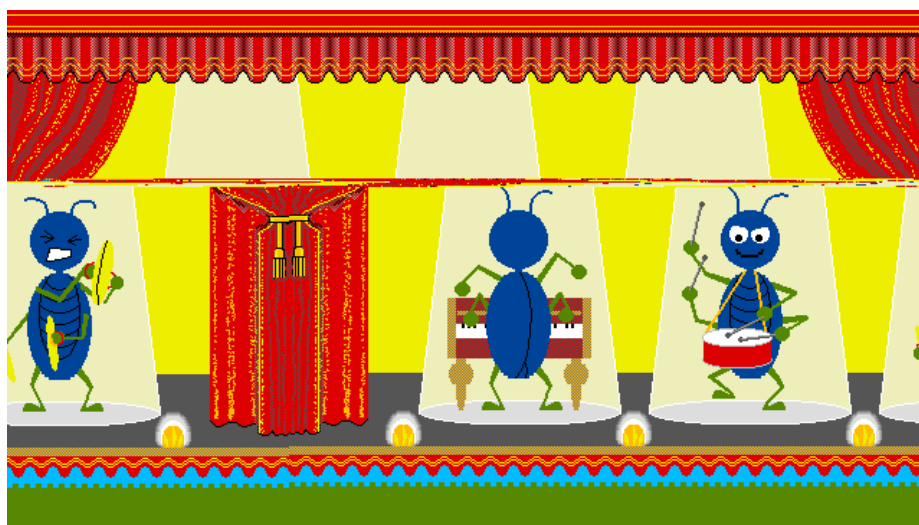
The ERIC program is a no-frills keyboard trainer. Specific key exercises, starting with the home keys and progressing through several levels to random keys, can be selected using menus. Displays of part of the keyboard on the screen show which key has to be pressed.

When pressed the computer sounds a note which can motivate the child to press the keys in time, keeping to a specific rhythm. Giving a child in year 1 five minutes practice a day on this may save valuable computer time in later years and give the child an invaluable skill for life. Perhaps even using some of those old (redundant?) BBCs.

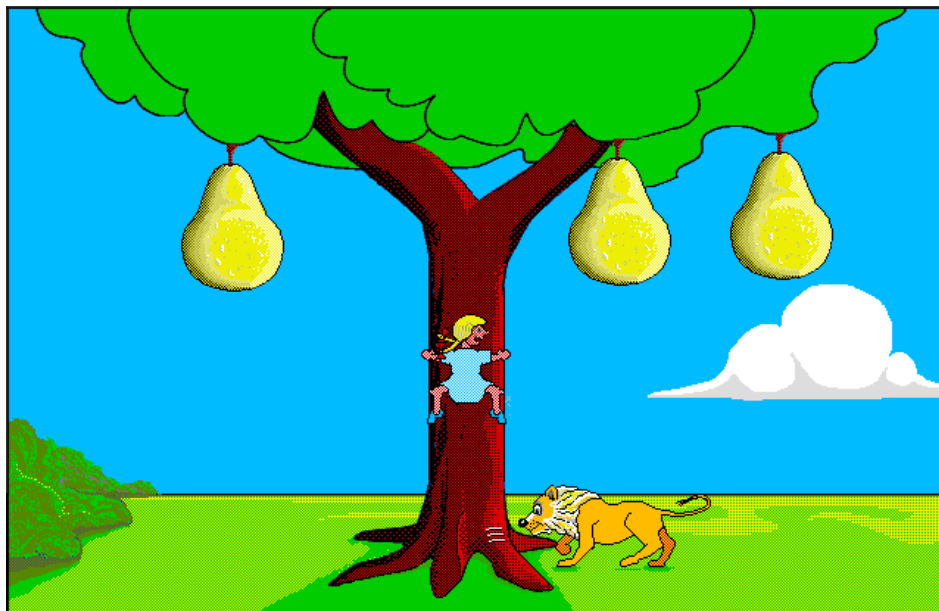
Cost: £14.50 from: E.R.I.C. International

Children in Year 4 and under need something a little simpler and perhaps more colourful. Two programs that fit the bill have come to my attention:

The first is an application produced by ERIC International. It began as, and still is, a BBC program, although the program is also sold on a



**f a l l s   b a r   b**



Omit paper eagerly

Top cpm 142  
Level 50  $\Delta$   
cpm 0

The second set of programs, ‘Speedy Keys’ is produced by Brilliant Computing and distributed through SEMERC. The pack comprises two floppy discs containing four separate games. ‘Four fun games to help children and adults improve their typing, reading and spelling skills.’ The emphasis is much more on fun here.

All the games have a great deal of humour built in with graphics and sound. Insects play musical instruments in time to the typist. A lion chases a little girl up a tree and only the typist’s skill can save her from sliding down into the lion’s

jaws. The typist can also save a hot air balloon from crashing into a cliff — although they can’t save a ship from sinking, which I thought was a bit off. And finally the typist can zap the mice who’ve got into the food cupboard by typing the letter displayed.

Each game is highly configurable. Each user can type in their name and their progress is recorded for the teacher to access

later. Speed levels and the types of letters, upper, lower or mixed case, can be selected. Words or phrases can be displayed instead of just letters although the phrases are randomly selected by the programs and don’t make a great deal of sense.

I had a lot of fun playing with Speedy Keys. I laughed out loud a few times. I’m sure children will love the games too and at the same time develop their typing skills. Cost: £30.00 from Brilliant or SEMERC.

*Geoff Stilwell*

## Disc Duplicating Service

Last year the Club bought a commercial disc duplicating machine to enable us to duplicate the thousands of discs we get through in a year.

Before we bought the machine, all of the discs were duplicated by hand which was

rather a major job, as you can imagine! Now that we have the machine, we are happy to make it available to members and small companies wishing to duplicate volumes of discs at very modest prices. For more details, contact Nick Evans at the Freepost address.

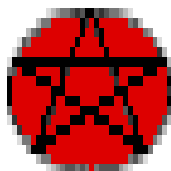
## What no games?!

The last few months have been very quiet for Acorn games fans, with few new releases to get excited about. A few new titles have appeared from small, unknown software houses set up by programmers themselves unable or unwilling to find a commercial publisher for their masterpiece.

Hopefully by next issue the Games Scene will have picked up again. In the meantime, if you own a Risc PC, don't forget that Club members are entitled to a 10% discount on *Game On! Release 2*, this discount is also available on the £5 upgrade price from the first version. Just return your disc to our Freepost address.

Finally, do you have an all-time favourite game? The type of game which doesn't gather dust in the cupboard after a few weeks because you still regularly play it, possibly years after buying it? If so, please write and tell us what makes the game so good and why you like it so much.

• The Games Zone • FREEPOST ND6573 •  
• London • N12 0BR •



## Detritus

The new graphical adventure from Myndgaemz  
reviewed by Frances & Kate Reed

Detritus, meaning debris — the question is whether this is an accurate description of the game! The scene is set just after the nuclear holocaust of 2050 which caused the loss of thousands of lives and brought the human race to the brink of extinction. A handful of northern survivors created a sanctuary on a European Island... do we think this might just mean Britain? These survivors have a fairly simple, almost primitive lifestyle, almost the same as you would

imagine Medieval man to have had, lacking any of the technological luxuries that we take for granted.

You take on the role of Nikki, a young woman desperately searching for her beloved Toni, whose mynd (sic) seems to have been affected during the holocaust as he has managed to fall foul of the omnipresent daemons and has been banished to another dimension as punishment. Now Nikki must rescue Toni



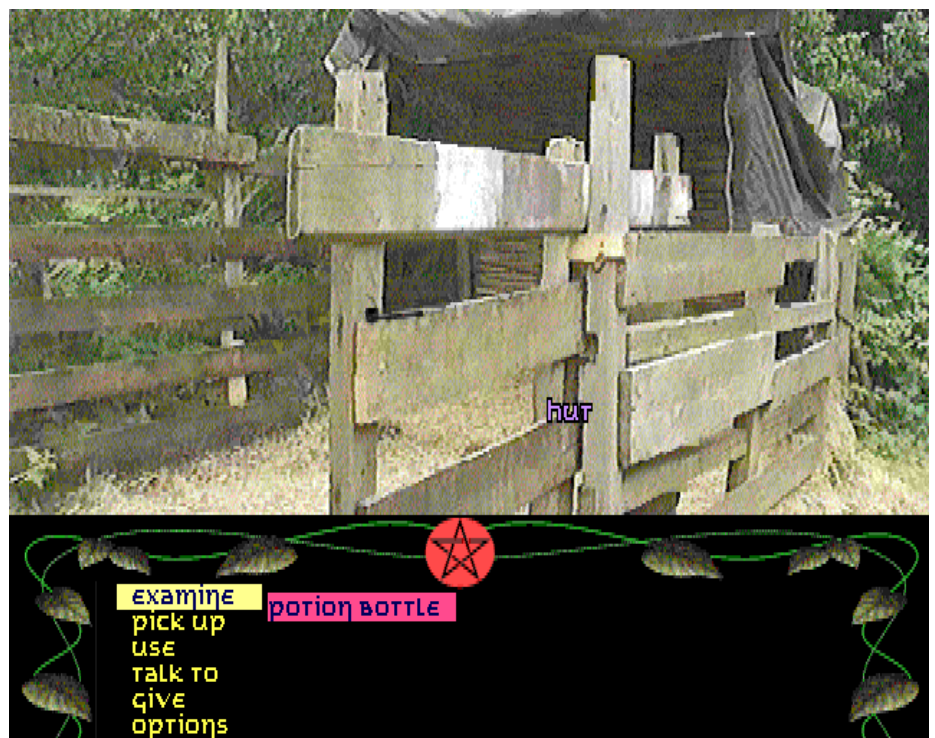


interact with all the characters you encounter and sometimes you will be able to select your own dialogue from the options given in the inventory bar (sound familiar)? Unfortunately, although the writers have attempted to keep the dialogue interesting by using weird and wonderful archaic spelling and a few rather feeble attempts at humour (when one of the daemons starts complaining that he doesn't really exist and makes jokes about being controlled by others...meaning the players), it lacks wit and can become a little dull when all the response you can get is "Hi Nikki, bye Nikki."

by performing tasks for the daemons while providing them with some light entertainment. All this (and more) is explained in the novella supplied with the game, which doubles up as a protection system. If you ignore the fact that the story is never going to be hailed as an ingenious piece of classic literature, it is a fairly 'novel' idea and supplies a good background for the game. However, it gives you no instructions for playing, loading or saving although with this type of game instructions hardly seem necessary.

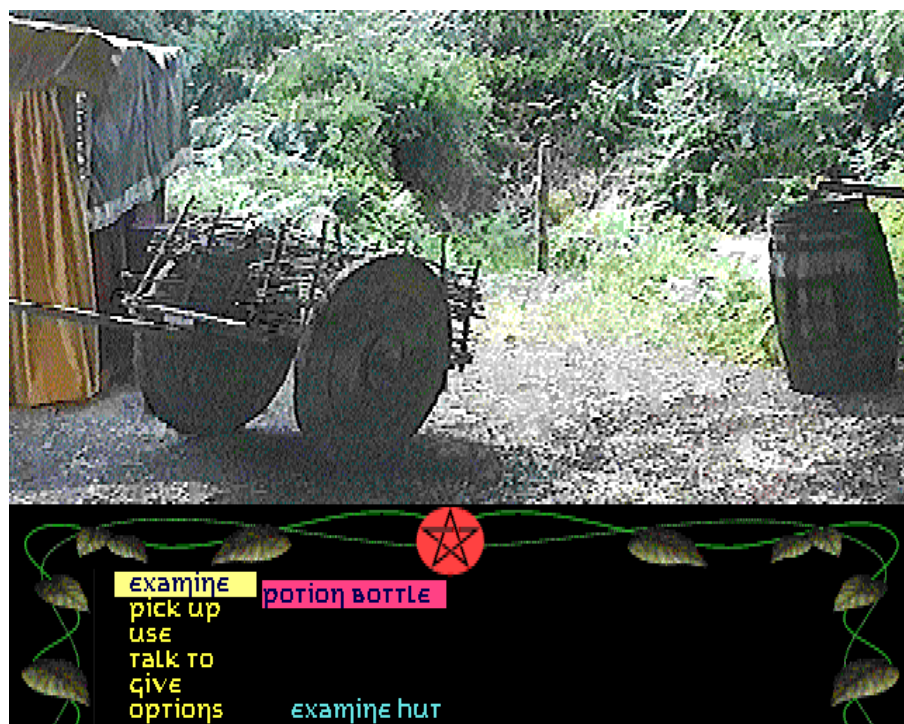
The game itself fits neatly into the same category as the much praised *Simon the Sorcerer*, being a point-and-click adventure. The commands and inventory are displayed at the bottom of the screen. You can

Those who have played *Simon the Sorcerer* may have been looking forward to a smoothly animated game but the extent of the animation was people and objects disappearing from the screen. Having said that, the images are of good quality and can be interesting and, in the



*The authors clearly had great fun writing this game!*

case of the hanged man, amusing. There are also some images which have been scanned and inserted over the background so that when you pick up an object it disappears into your inventory. To accompany the wonderful images of people posing in costume, there is atmospheric music playing in the background. This can become annoyingly repetitive but there is different music to fit different scenes.



like Katie and myself...who got stuck about five minutes into the game! There is plenty to keep your mind working and all the answers are there to be found...you just have to talk to the right people.

Generally the game is very playable...so it may be a little infuriating when you are clicking frantically to try and save the game and nothing happens...then you realise that it has saved already. So the music may be a little annoying after a while. Overall it is an impressive looking game although the playability may leave a little to be desired.

Detritus?..possibly, but it is an interesting offering from a fairly new group on the games scene.

*Kate and Frances Reed*

Initially the gameplay is very good, there are plenty of puzzles to solve and lots to discover. It can become frustrating unless you are astounding intellectuals

*Detritus costs £25 from Myndgaemz,  
18 Mallory Crescent, Fareham,  
Hants PO16 7QA.*

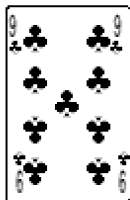
## Freepost = No stamp!

The Club has used a Freepost address for several years now, and we have found it very effective at encouraging you to keep in touch with us!

However a surprising number of people (especially companies) still stick stamps on items sent to the Freepost address. The ARM Club Magazine page 75

Unfortunately when this happens, we still have to pay the postage **and** your stamp is franked, so the Royal Mail gets paid twice for the same item of mail!

If you do not want to use our Freepost address, please send items to: 19 Woodberry Way, London N12 0HE.



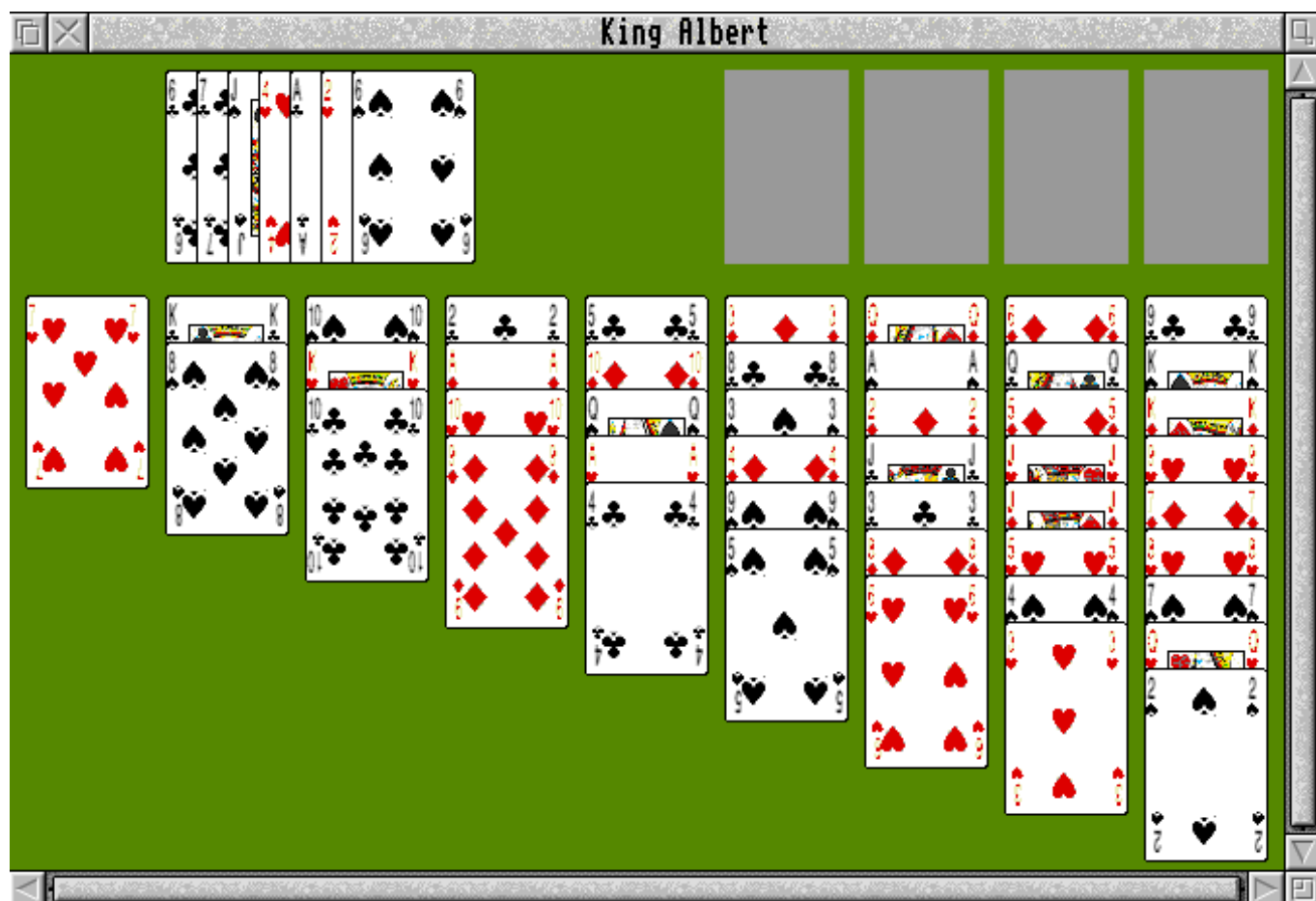
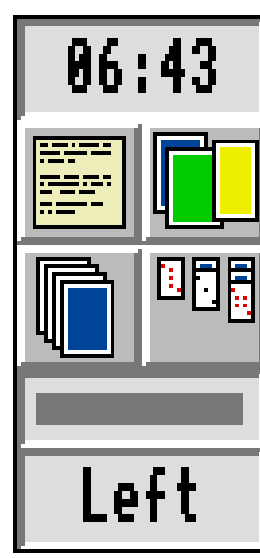
# The Patience Addict

Geoff Stilwell shows his skill at cards

Now I don't get much time for playing games on my computer but I do like an occasional dabble with something that is not going to tax my mind unduly and is not going to threaten my existence (like some shoot-em-ups make me feel). Patience is a game I do like playing with cards once in a while. Patience is the ideal game for the computer. The machine takes all the drudgery out of playing the game. It deals the cards in nice neat rows and columns in the minimum of space, gives you the rules, and helps you play the game, the main disadvantage with the computer is it doesn't let you cheat.

Creative Curriculum Software has released a collection of patience games on one disc, called The Patience Addict. The games can be played directly from the floppy or the whole collection installed onto your hard disc, easily accessible for those odd idle moments. The Pati-

ence Addict contains 20 different games of patience including King Edward & Klondike that I recognised and several others that I didn't. I became frustrated







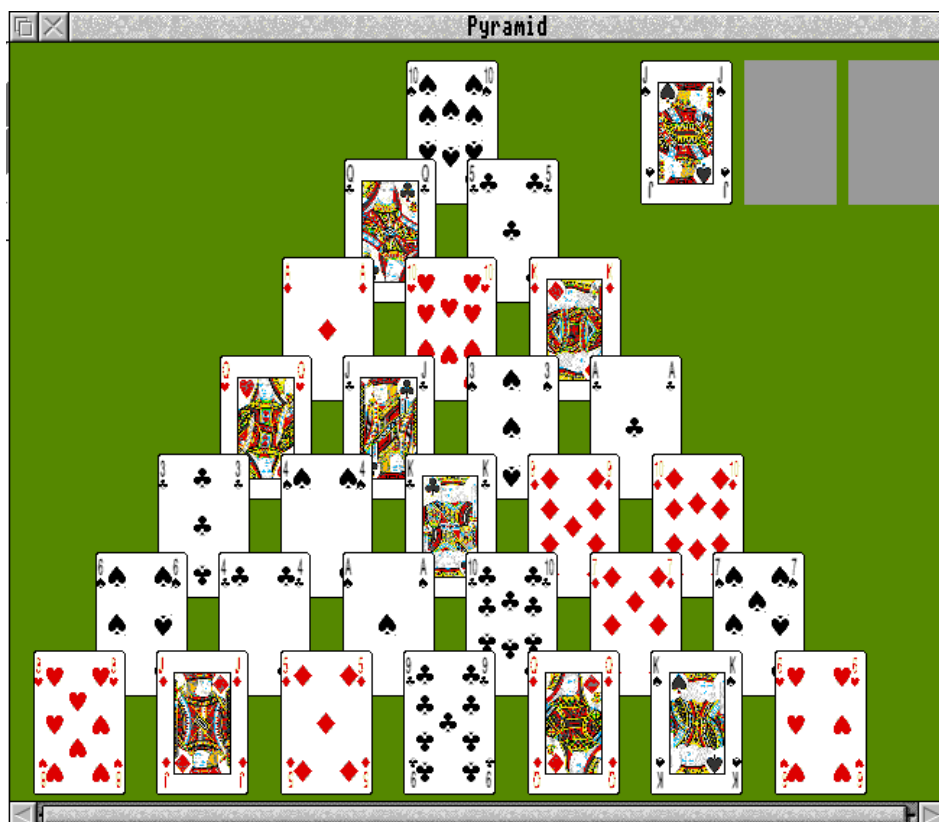
playing some of the games because there did appear to be more constraints compared with when I have played the games with cards, like how many

I took 6 mins 43 secs as you can see from the indicator here. There is a range of difficulty ranging from Pyramid's 'Easy' to Scorpion's 'Virtually Impossible', and a range of average times from 2 to 25 minutes.

The interface is very easy to use. I only read the info sheet supplied after I'd played a couple of games just to see if I'd missed anything.

My only criticism with the package is that some of the card's numbers were difficult to see at 100% scale. If the

time I could redeal the stack pack. I did manage to win one game of Pyramid where I had to make pairs totalling 13, but then the little box that pops up to introduce the game did say that one was easy and the average time was 2 minutes.



scaling was increased so the numbers were clear then it was not always possible to see the whole game board. Perhaps a larger number on another deck of cards would be a useful addition to the program.

*Geoff Stilwell*

*The Patience Addict  
Cost: £16.98 + VAT  
From Creative  
Curriculum Software.*

# Members' Advertisements

## For Sale

**A5000 computer**, 4MB RAM, 210MB HD with AKF18 Multiscan Monitor. Price: £500 ono. Tel Steve on 01438-312257 after 7pm .

**Acorn Multimedia Expansion Unit** including Sony double-speed CD-ROM drive, audio mixer, power supply, spare drive bay and volume control all in an A4000 style case. Boxed as new with manuals and lead. Needs SCSI interface. Price: £100 including P&P. Tel Simon on 0973 891330.

**A4000 computer**, 4MB RAM, 80MB HD with multiscan monitor and PC386 card. Price: £375 ono. Tel Toby on 0116 241 3850 or 0121 414 0913.

## Advertising

Any items can be advertised for sale or wanted in Eureka, subject to common sense restrictions. Please send in your adverts to the Freepost address, but remember that Eureka is only a quarterly publication.

## For Sale

**Citizen Swift 240C** colour 24 pin dot matrix printer with cover and extra ribbons £75. Printer stand & paper tray £5. CC Canon TurboDriver V4 £10. Plus more. Tel 01962 880250 evenings

**CC Scanlight 256 Video** combined hand held scanner and digitiser. Excellent condition boxed with manuals and software. Price: £110 ono including P&P. Tel 0973 891330.

**Acorn JP150 bubblejet printer** with sheetfeeder and 1 full cartridge. Price: £100 ono. Tel Ralph on 01785 714535.

**Software for sale:** Inertia, Saloon Cars, E-Type+Des, Drop Ship, Pool/Break, PowerBand, Tein World, Nevryon, Olympics, Apocalypse, Black Angel. £4 each. Elite £7. Skyfall Font Pack (1-6) +clipart. Over 40 discs £25. All items £60 Tel 0181 871 9398.

**Star LC24-200** colour printer & ribbons £85. Wolfenstein £15, Diggers £12, Dungeon £10. Desktop DB £10, Revelation £20, Atelier £20, PCEm with DOS6 £25, Real McCoy 2 £15. TechWriter £50. Tel 01727 856085





# Recent News from Acorn

It is quite difficult keeping track of what Acorn is doing at the moment because things are changing so fast. For partly understandable reasons, Acorn is reluctant to give out information which is likely to change in the near future.

Acorn Online Media, as it is now called, has been continuing its success recently winning the award for *Most innovative cable or satellite telecommunications product* for its STB2 set top box at the 1996 Cable & Satellite Show.

Rumours have been surfacing recently about the ARM7500 processor (or a variant) being used in a future colour version of the Nintendo Gameboy. For obvious reasons ARM and ART are keeping very tight lipped but if true, this is potentially very exciting news for all existing Acorn users.

At the BETT Show, first details emerged of Acorn's plans for a range of PC clone computers. The status of these may have changed since the formation of Xemplar. The Tesco Scheme this year features several Acorn Pentium PCs, ranging from a 75MHz 8MB RAM system upwards. No more details are available but keep your eyes peeled over the coming months for Xemplar's new education catalogue.

ART has recently launched a replacement for the old Acorn Registered Developer Scheme. Companies and developers potentially interested in joining this scheme should contact Dave Walker, [isvquery@acorn.co.uk](mailto:isvquery@acorn.co.uk), for more information about what is involved.

Olivetti has reduced its shareholding in Acorn Computer Group plc to a mere 46%. As a result, it is no longer the majority shareholder but this size of holding will still give it significant influence over the company. This move was welcomed by Acorn which believes it will offer more flexibility for new partnerships and enhanced visibility for the group itself.

ART recently sent out its latest mailshot to members of *Clan Acorn*, their enthusiast scheme. This included some demonstration applications intended to provoke comment on the future of RISC OS applications.

Acorn's DX4-100 and 5x86 PC Cards for the Risc PC are now shipping, albeit in limited quantities. At the time of writing, the long-awaited web browser for Acorn's InterTalk still has not been released, however the new Programmer's Reference Manual Supplement for RISC OS 3.60 is available from dealers.

More exciting news in our next newsletter and in Eureka issue 19.

*Simon Burrows*

## *Coming in Eureka 19 . . .*

- **The latest news about ART and Xemplar Education**
- **The Clan — should I bother joining?**
- **Commercial Internet Access packages, including the very latest versions from Doggysoft and ANT.**
- **Cambridge Open Day — what's new and exciting?**
- **The latest in Mark Smith's series on writing RISC OS relocatable modules**
- **Networking your house, how to be the ultimate spod**
- **Acorn World 1996, more details as they emerge**
- **Local Clubs: a look at the Wakefield Acorn Computer Group**
- **Upgrading my machine — what should I buy?**
- **Why should I use Corel Draw on my Acorn PC Card?**
- **Members' Advertisements, Club News and much more.**

***Don't miss Eureka issue 19, expected publication date July! Keep your articles and news coming in.***